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Rud. Leonhart.

EITHER, OR,

——BY——

RUDOLPH LEONHART, A. M.

——AUTHOR OF——

"Dolores," "The Children of the Outlaw," "Through Blood and Iron," "The Wild Rose," "The Treasure of Montezuma," Etc.

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CANTON, OHIO.
ROLLER PRINTING CO., PRINTERS.
1893.

L5805

INTRODUCTION.

The country to which we beg the reader to accompany us, bears the name of Occidentia. It is situated in the Western Hemisphere, and abounds with the most precious gifts of Nature. It is traversed by mighty mountain ranges, amongst which we mention the Purple, the Dogskill, the Stony and the Waterfall Mountains, and watered by grand watercourses, amongst which the Muddyfloody or Uncle of Waters, the Dove River and Shriver's Run are conspicuous. Grain of every description, cotton and corn, cover its vast plains, while the grape-vine and fruit-trees of every kind adorn its slopes. Oil and gas stream from its bosom and minerals of inestimable value are hidden in its bowels. It is a confederacy of States, its capital * * *

Here we are interrupted by our readers, not in so many words, but by that arching of the brows and that knowing smile, so provoking to a writer who flatters himself to communicate something new. It is no use to proceed before we have humored this unmistakable sign on the part of our readers to make themselves heard, so we yield them the floor and ask politely, "Worthy masters, amiable dames, what is it you wish to say, or to state it more pointedly, what have you discovered? For your knowing smile surely means nothing less."

"Oh, Mr. Scribbler, only this: The country you have so eloquently described, is nothing else than—"

"The United States of North America, you would say? Please let us finish our pen pictures, and if you then insist upon having your say, or rather your way, we cannot hinder you, but must shift the consequences to your shoulders."

Its Capital, whose name is Patropolis, contains some of the finest edifices in the world. Its monuments surpass in height and grandeur the Pyramids of Egypt and the Coliseum of Rome. In its legislative chambers the Solons of the land meet to celebrate upon its weal or woe, as many discontented voices whisper; but the most wonderful place in its precincts, is a little room called the lobby, where the Nabobs of the land

kindly lend their aid to the Solons, magnetizing them with the subtle stream emanating from their coffers, which solidifies in their pockets.

In this mighty country the coal mines belong to private corporations, the oil wells and basins to trusts and syndicates, which have no heart and pitilessly grind from the poor their slender means, to secure these indispensible necessaries of life. The directory of every city shows you dozens of millionaires, but thousands of poor working women, who stitch or sew away their lives, to keep soul and body together, and hundreds of thousands of wretched beings, who either tramp the country to eke out a precarious existence, or rove the streets of the cities to solve the problem, where to procure the next meal. Corporations control the highways, levying at pleasure a tax upon the industries of the Nation, and shape the legislation of the various States, to suit their selfish purposes.

Do you still think, dear reader, it is the United States of North America? Do you recognize the features enumerated above as characteristic of the Union? If you do, remember that this is a bird of your hatching, and that you must be responsible for the fledgeling. As to us, we close these introductory remarks, and raise the curtain from scenes, in which the noblest aspirations, the grandest virtues of our race are blended with the most degrading vices, the most shameless selfishness, the despicable greed and the heartless indifference for the welfare of the race so characteristic of the age. If these scenes shock you, dear reader, do not forget that they are not of our own making, but that you are, in a measure, responsible for their existence, if not by your positive actions, at least by your negative toleration.

Do not forget that History will, some day, sit in judgment over you, and say: "They saw these horrors, but indolence, indifference or cowardice prevented them from using their strength and influence for their removal." Richly, indeed, shall we consider ourselves paid for this effort, if it arouse one single soul to the consciousness of its duty, to work with word and deed, with might and main, for the removal of the spots which now stain and deface the escutcheon of society.

EITHER, OR.

CHAPTER I.

A DREADFUL SHOCK.

Turn over the leaves of your memory, dear reader, and see whether you can recollect some balmy summer afternoon followed in the evening by a tempest whose violence shook the earth to its very depths, whose lightnings blasted the sturdy oak, and whose torrents filled the streams to overflowing? You will, no doubt, remember that the charms of that afternoon were doubly enticing by the subsequent horrors, and for that very reason, imprinted themselves indelibly on your memory.

Man's soul life shows many analogous cases. To-day we journey along, basking in the sunshine of happiness, our minds filled with joyous anticipation of coming bliss. Our buoyant steps hardly feel the ground on which they glide, and our full hearts are tempted to force our lips into joyous shouts of rapture, to proclaim to the world that our measure of contentment is full to overflowing. Suddenly the dart descends from a blue sky, rending our heart, and making us wretched in proportion to our previous happiness. Happy we, who escape with a scar, telling of former beauty, if we have the strength of character necessary to extract a wholesome lesson from wormwood or to remodel our character. The weak, the wavering, may sink under the blow, deserving the pity, not the condemnation of their hardier brethren.

It is our sad task to witness such a mental tempest. The scene is the city of Plutopolis; the season, summer; the time, the twilight of evening. One of the numerous railroad trains

which unload their human freight daily in the gigantic city, rolls into the depot, and as it stops, one of the passengers snatches a small valice from the seat, and hastily leaves the car. As he steps upon the platform, brightly lit up by electric light, we see that the traveler is young, perhaps not older than eighteen. His form is slender and well knit, measuring about five feet ten. His features are regular, and a pair of keen steel-blue eyes gazes sharply about. Light brown hair protrudes from under a slouched hat, while the firmly lined mouth and chin are, as yet, free from a beard of any kind. His brows are slightly arched, and the decisive step, the steady glance of the eyes and a certain resoluteness of bearing, indicate a readiness of purpose, calculated to meet emergencies with steadiness and determination.

The youth hurries to one of the numerous doors of exit, and gazes at the various street cars which pass before the depot in every direction. At length he spies the desired car, and beckons to the driver to stop, quickening his steps into a run, until the car is reached. He springs upon the rear platform, and then entering the interior, drops into a vacant seat, and abandons himself unto a train of thought which, to judge from the smile playing on his lips and the merry twinkle of his eyes, must be of a joyous nature.

For half an hour he pays no heed to his surroundings, but when after the expiration of that time, the car reaches a more thinly populated suburb, he looks around with lively interest, a smile lighting up his face, and a joyous recognition animating his features.

Now he rings the bell, and with the disregard to danger so common to strength and agility, springs to the ground long before the phlegmatic driver has stopped the car. The youth runs rather than walks to the sidewalk, and knocks at the door of a modest but nevertheless substantial cottage. Then he bends his head, listening eagerly for signs of life within, his features brightening all the while and the smile of anticipation breaking almost into a chuckle, as if he meant to say:

"Won't they be surprised, the dear old folks? There is a footstep? Now, we shall see."

The step within is a light one, as if originating with a woman, a circumstance which does not escape the youth, for his lips move and he whispers "Mother!" Now the key turns, the door is pulled back a few inches, and an elderly woman, bearing a lamp in her hand, peers into the darkness which is fast settling over the city. The youth is on the point of uttering an exclamation, when the voice of the woman startles him and seals his lips. "Who is there, and what do you wish?" she inquired in tones which he has never heard before. She has opened the door a little farther and shows him a face as strange as the voice.

"Won't you step in?" she resumes, seeing his evident bewilderment. He mechanically obeys, but stops just inside the door, saying in a dazed manner: "Beg pardon, I must have made a mistake in the house, and yet I hardly comprehend how that was possible."

"Whom do you wish to find, sir?" said the lady in a friendly tone of voice, which youth and fairness are so apt to awaken.

"Mr. Woods, Madam," he answered mechanically, for he has evidently lost his bearings.

"Mr. George Woods?"

"Yes, Madam, Mr. George Woods."

"Then you are not aware that Mr. Woods is dead, has, in fact, been dead these three months?"

You have probably heard the expression of the flash of lightning from a blue sky, reader. The expression is a hackneyed one and, moreover, an absurdity, for there are no such flashes; still, you will pardon us for borrowing it on this occasion. There is, indeed, no other which will express so forcibly the stunning effect which these few words produced upon the youth. Stunned is exactly the word, for only a person stunned fails to betray the effect of such a crushing blow. The bewilderment on his face deepened, and he merely stammered: "DEAD! DEAD! And—and—my—Mrs. Woods?"

"She, too, is dead, died a week after her husband," she informed him in a tone of indifference, such as we assume when we speak about strangers, or are ignorant of the fact that we plunge a dagger into the heart of the listener.

"DEAD!" he echoed, this time louder, as if partly awakened to the dreadful disaster which had occurred in this house during his absence. At the same time the valise dropped from his hand, which glided mechanically over his pallid face. The woman began to comprehend that her words had hurt the stranger, for a look of apprehension stole from her eyes and she said, with much sympathy in her voice, stepping a little nearer: "Did you know them, sir? Perhaps they were relatives, or—good Heavens? perhaps you are the son that—"

She did not finish, for the stranger suddenly wheeled round, and rushed from the building, without heeding his baggage. The woman made a motion as if to stop him, but he either failed to notice it, or purposely disregarded it, for he shut the door behind him, and with a mien half stupefied, half dazed, staggered away into the darkness. The woman inside gazed at the closed door, a picture of intense compassion combined with uncertainty as to the best course to pursue.

"Poor lad!" she said pityingly, her eyes filling with tears; "no wonder he is distracted with grief. Who would not, under like circumstances? I wish I could have told him, for I fear he may do something rash under the influence of this dreadful news. And here is his valise; I must go and consult father, he will probably know what we had better do in this distressing case."

With this she picked up the valise and walked towards the room from which she had stepped. We will leave her to follow the wanderer who hastened through the night air with an ever increasing speed, but without any apparent aim or purpose. His brain seemed in a whirl, through which only one word or rather conception reached the seat of consciousness, namely, the word DEAD! Both parents dead; the noble father whom he had both loved and respected as one of the best of men; his mother, the embodiment of everything good,

lovable, wise and inspiring. Six months ago he had left them well, contented and apparently in the midst of affluence, and now, dead; gone from him, never to return to the loving son, whose heart nearly burst with a vague, but nevertheless intense yearning for the departed. Is it a wonder that he reeled along the dimly lit streets like one drunk? That he was incapable of forming any connected idea, except that of the terrible, irreparable loss he had sustained? Now and then one of the few persons he met would stop and gaze after the silent figure disapprovingly, uttering or thinking the word "drunk." Several times a policeman pursuing his nightly calling, was on the point of arresting the steps of the youth; but a certain something in the contracted brow, the vacant gaze of the fixed eyes, stayed his uplifted hand and checked the words rising to his lips, and caused him to content himself with a shake of the head and a muttered remark, expressing his belief that something must have gone wrong with the lad.

It was about eight when the wanderer started on his erratic course. The sky had been cloudy all afternoon, but now the clouds became darker and denser, and about nine began to send down showers of rain. At the same time a fierce north wind arose, blowing the heavy drops into the face of the youth, who did not seem merely indifferent to, but even unconscious of the storm. He drew a deep breath, as if he enjoyed the tumult of the elements without, as congenial to the one raging in his bseast. This enjoyment was, however, unconscious, like everything else within him, excepting the maddening thought of DEAD! Both dead!

The storm increased in fury, the minutes grew into hours, and the bell of a distant church tolled the hour of midnight without any visible abatement in the speed of this erratic race. Nor is it likely that even the dawn of day would have witnessed its cessation, if the inexorable laws of Nature, in the shape of utter exhaustion, had not, at last, arrested the steps of the wanderer. He reeled with faintness now, and for the first time cast a conscious glance around him. In the faint

light of dawn he perceived that he was in the suburbs of a city, probably Plutopolis, a fact he made certain by reading the name of a railway station in whose vicinity he had arrested his steps. It was, indeed, a suburb of Plutopolis, but fully twelve miles from its center, showing that he had traveled that distance during his reckless march. While yet reading the name of the station and learning these facts, he heard the rumbling of a train, which drew up at the station a minute later, to accommodate a number of early passengers, plying their vocation in the city.

Half mechanically our friend selected a ticket, and boarding a train, was rapidly whirled back to the scene of the appalling discovery of last night. Bodily fatigue now assumed the friendly office of comforter, and when, half an hour later, the youth alighted a second time at the depot, which had witnessed the arrival of the happy lad, full of joyous anticipation, he was more collected than at any time since his visit to the home of his childhood. Becoming conscious of the dilapidated condition of his attire and the wondering gaze of the passerby, he hastily withdrew from the crowded thoroughfare, and entering a street car, was once more taken into the neighborhood of the dwelling at which we saw him knock. This time he passed it, and entering a street one block farther east, soon knocked at the door of a modest little dwelling. Again the door was opened; again a woman appeared on the threshold, who uttered a cry of delight coupled with the cry of "Richard, Richard!" A moment later the woman and the weather-stained wanderer were enfolded in a close embrace, both parties mingling copious tears and indulging in fervent exclamations of endearment. At last the woman disengaged herself and said, her utterance half choked by convulsive sobs: "And you know, Richard? You know, that—"

She did not finish, but he answered nevertheless, anticipating her meaning: "I do know, Aunt Laura, though I cannot yet comprehend the possibility of the dreadful fact, or fathom its full meaning."

"Poor boy," she cried with a new embrace, and a renew-

al of her sobs; "but what is this? You are wet, bespattered with mud from head to foot. Where have you been?"

"I hardly know, Aunt Laura," he replied, with a sad attempt at a smile, "when I learned the news over there last night, I wandered off, anxious to flee from the dreadful consciousness of my bereavement, and must have walked about all night, for, this morning, I found myself at Elmwood Station."

"Twelve miles from the city!" she exclaimed, "you must be tired and hungry, and I let you stand out here, without thinking of your condition, idiot that I am! Come in Richard and change your clothes, while I prepare breakfast. The fire is burning, and it won't take me long. But where is your baggage? Have you no apparel with you?"

"Let me think, Aunty. You see, I am quite dazed yet, and have to think. I surely had a valise with me last night, but where I left it, is more than I can tell."

"Perhaps you left it at the house, where—"

"I called last night," he completed; "perhaps I did. At all events, I can soon ascertain."

He was on the point of carrying out his design, when his relative stopped him, saying: "No, Dick, you come in and take a bath, while I run over to find out. I have hot water, and you must refresh yourself, while I get your things. Nay, do not contradict, my boy, for I shall not allow you to take another step from this cottage before you have recovered your strength."

With this she led him into the hall, and thence into a room where she made him sit down. Next she prepared him a bath, and then said in her motherly way, which seemed to soothe and console him:

"So, Dick, everything is ready. Take off your wet clothes and bathe while I am gone. That is a good boy. Good bye, dear, I won't be gone long."

With this she withdrew, while he mechanically obeyed her injunctions, removing his wet and soiled garments with an effort, showing plainly that his strength was well nigh

spent. The application of the tepid water to his weary limbs was both soothing and refreshing, but also produced a drowsiness so overwhelming, that he could scarcely keep his eyes open, and might, indeed, have fallen asleep, if a knock at the door had not aroused him to a consciousness of his condition and surroundings.

"Dick, here is your valise," he heard his aunt say, "now dress, while I get your breakfast ready."

He received the valise and managed to slip on a dry suit of clothes. While thus occupied, he heard his aunt stir the fire in the neighboring kitchen and set the table. When he had dressed, he walked drowsily into the kitchen, where his relative received him with a smile, and: "Ah, there you are! And here is your breakfast. Sit down and eat this nice piece of steak; it will restore your strength."

He obeyed mechanically, but she saw from his motions that he was half asleep; so she said encouragingly, "just eat a bite Dick and then you shall sleep. Here, drink this coffee, it is hot, and will warm you up."

She bustled about him, while he obeyed with the readiness of a little child. When he laid down his knife and fork, she resumed, "And that is really all? Well, come then to my room, and lie down on the bed. Never mind your shoes, Dick, they won't hurt the spread." He threw himself on the soft bed, and was dimly conscious, that she imprinted a kiss on his brow. Then came deep and total oblivion, and with it for a while, the cessation of the pain engendered by the crushing bereavement he had endured. Blessed sleep, harbinger of rest and peace to the mourner and the sufferer! Well would it be for many a mortal, if thou couldst be prolonged into the sleep of death; for, on thy departure, the throbbing of the temple, the aching of the heart, the racking of the brain, are apt, nay sure, to recommence.

It was dusk, when Richard returned to consciousness. His gaze fell upon the ceiling above him, without bringing, however, a comprehension of his situation. Next they fell upon the furniture of the room, and, at last, fastened themselves

upon the figure of a woman who sat in a rocking chair near the window, plying a set of knitting needles with both vigor and skill. We may as well seize this opportunity to introduce her to our readers. Mrs. Laura Kean was about forty-five, and well preserved for her age. She was a brunette, and her dark brown hair showed very few of those silver threads betokening the approach of age. Her features were well-shaped, without being remarkably handsome. Her eyes were large, and in color and character, much like those of her nephew, betraying the same steadfastness and intelligence. Nor was the firmness and determination of the lips and chin lacking, which attracted our attention on our first meeting with the youth. The resemblance would have been more marked, if the hair and complexion of the youth had not played more into the blonde; but even the casual observer could hardly fail to discover, that these two persons were mentally related, both betraying similarity of tastes, likings and dispositions, which could not help cementing a firm friendship and warm affection between them. The gaze of the youth must have had magnetic power, for it had hardly dwelled on her a second, when she turned her face in the direction of her guest, thus obtaining the intelligence that he was awake. A few seconds later she stood at his side, and looking lovingly into his eyes, said:

"Good evening, my lad, how do you feel now?"

"Very well, Aunt Laura," he replied, rising energetically to a sitting posture. "Have I slept long?"

"All day, Dick. But now come, supper is ready, and you must make up for the failure which your drowsinesss occasioned this morning."

She took his hand, and led him to the kitchen, where the pair sat down to a tempting meal. It was eaten in silence, only interrupted by such remarks as the nature of the occupation occasioned. When it was over, they returned to the bedroom, and sat down, a sad solemnity stealing over their features. After a few minutes of silence Richard took her hand, and said in a low but steady voice:

"Now, Aunt Laura, tell me all about it."

She looked at him wistfully, then said:

"Are you strong enough to hear it, Dick?"

"As strong now as I will be to-morrow; but tell me Aunt is there something shocking—something dreadful, besides the mere sadness of their sudden—I mean this untimely bereavement?"

She hesitated a moment; then giving his hand a firm pressure, replied: "Poor boy, I wish, oh, how I wish, I could say there is not. But, alas! there is. I might be tempted to conceal this feature of the case from you, were it not, that your mother left certain papers which I promised to deliver into your hands. Besides, your sister's—" She stopped, for she felt a sudden tremor passing over her nephew's form. A deadly pallor covered his features, and he made an attempt to rise, which proved abortive, for he fell back at the same time gasping:

"Elinor! I never once thought of her! Is she, she too—" He did not finish, but looked so imploringly at her, that she hastened to reply:

"Not dead, Richard, not dead, thank heaven, but—"

He breathed a deep sigh of relief, then said mechanically: "But what, Aunty? She is not here, I see. What has become of her? Is she in the city? Can't I see her now, or soon, at least?"

All these questions were uttered spasmodically, and with such rapidity that no one could have answered them. When he had finished, Mrs. Kean looked pitifully at him, like one who is compelled to impart sad news:

"I fear, you cannot, Richard, for she is not in the city."

"But where, Aunt Laura, where? Do not torture me."

"I do not know myself, Richard."

"Do not know?" he repeated in a bewildered manner, his words conveying a silent reproach. This showed Mrs. Kean, the necessity of dispatch, and she hastened to reply:

"Richard, do not think hard of me; Elinor is married."

"Married?" again he echoed, "married? Under the circumstances? I do, I cannot, understand."

"It is hard to understand, but I will endeavor to put it into the proper light. You know Elinor is not very—that is, she has not as much—as much—" The poor woman stopped evidently afraid to hurt his feelings.

"Prudence, or intelligence, you mean," he broke in impatiently. "Yes, I know, Aunt Laura, but for that very reason—" He in turn hesitated, for his next word would have implied another reproach. His aunt felt this, she said earnestly, but without acrimony:

"I should have watched and guided her, you mean? Well, I tried, Richard, but if your poor sister lacks your intelligence, she resembles you at least in the obstinacy of purpose which marked your conduct formerly, if it does not now."

A glance of humor stole from his eyes, but he only remarked: "Go on, Aunty."

"Well, it happened in this way: after the death of your parents, Elinor came to live with me. She had hardly been here a week, when a family, consisting of mother and son, moved into the next house. The mother called on me, and was very friendly, but I felt a repugnance to her from the very first moment. Nor was her son any more to my liking, but he was so civil and courteous that I could not well show him any rudeness either to him or his mother. He managed to become acquainted with Elinor, and, although I warned her from the start, she met his advances half way. He was handsome, and had the manner of a gentleman, qualities to which Elinor attaches undue importance. So the fellow, whose name is Arthur Roberts, became an open and avowed suitor for your sister's hand. His conduct was upright and straightforward, I must confess, although I never ceased, distrusting him or warning her. One day Mrs. Roberts called, and in her son's name, asked Elinor's hand in marriage. She showed me papers proving that the young man is possessed of ample means to support a wife, and then begged me to advocate her son's cause with Elinor. When I declined this insinuation,

she politely, but positively asked permission to see your sister, and as Elinor is of age and her own mistress, it would have been idle to refuse. They met, and an hour later Elinor informed me that she had accepted Arthur's proposal, giving as her reasons her love for him and her desire of procuring a male protector. In vain I remonstrated, urging the lack of sufficient acquaintance as a cause for prudence and caution. True, she promised to postpone the marriage day sufficiently to gain a better insight into Arthur's character, but this promise she broke, for, in one day, when I returned from after a business visit to the lower city, I found Elinor gone, leaving only a short note in which she informed me that the necessity of Arthur's return to Lakopolis, where he pretended to work as foreman in a factory, made the immediate performance of the ceremony unavoidable. She moreover stated that they had been married that very morning in Mrs. Robert's house, and would depart on the noon train for their new home. She closed by saying good bye, promising to write, giving the name of Harter Bros., Printers, as the firm for which Arthur, or as she called him, her husband worked.

You may imagine my consternation at the reception of this news. Perhaps it was too late to prevent the ruin of the poor girl, for as such I could not help considering her rash step. I hastened to the door of Mrs. Robert's cottage—it was locked, and no knocking, however vigorous, brought a response from within. I hurriedly called at the next house and there, on my inquiry, learned that the Roberts' had driven off at about 12 o'clock that morning, in company with my niece who seemed to be very happy. That is the last I heard of poor Elinor, my boy."

"And she did not fulfill her promise to write?"

"No, Richard. At all events, no letter of hers ever reached me."

"And the address, Aunt Laura. Did you make use of it?"

"I did, Richard, but—but—"

Once more she hesitated as if loth to communicate bad

news. His anxious, searching glance, however, was not to be resisted; so she continued:

"There is no such firm in Lakopolis, Richard."

The ominous silence which followed proved to a certainty that Richard comprehended the full import of these words. If the man whom his sister had married so rashly had deceived her friends in this instance, was he likely to be reliable and trustworthy in other matters? Was he likely to keep his marriage vow, or—horrible to think—had he married her at all? At last he broke the silence by saying:

"I must and shall see into this, and try to find my sister, Aunt Laura; but now proceed, please, and end an uncertainty which is well nigh unbearable. How, when and why did my poor parents die?"

"How?" she echoed, looking wistfully into vacancy. Then, gasping for breath, and making a desperate effort at composure, she continued: "Your father died with a malignant fever into which the machination of a fiend in human form had thrown him."

He gave a violent start at these words; then he gazed at her intently, as if he feared a derangement of her brain. Taking her hand in a compassionate manner he said, soothingly: "Dear Aunty, the recital of these sad events is too much for you. Delay its continuation till to-morrow."

"You fear for my reason, Richard? And you are truly pardonable for such an assumption, for the idea is horrible enough, to upset the strongest reason. But I am authorized, or rather commanded, to place papers in your hand, which substantiate every word I have said."

Richard sat one moment like one dazed. Then he rose slowly to his feet, and asked in tones whose coldness contrasted strangely with the emotions to which he had evidently fallen prey:

"His name, Aunt Laura, his name?"

She shook her head pensively and said: "Nay, learn that from your mother's communications. I would not have said even this much, if my silence could have saved your

mind from such direful knowledge, for I sincerely doubt the wisdom of awakening in your heart the thirst for vengeance which will not only mar your happiness, but may lead to your destruction. I leave the responsibility with her who enacted from me the solemn promise to hand to you a diary in which she has laid down both her thoughts and a narrative of the principal events of her life."

"As you wish, Aunt Laura; but where is this diary?"

"She rose, and going to a bureau, took from its upper drawer a sealed package which she laid into his hand without a word of explanation. The youth received it reverently and as he kissed the lines of address penned by the hand of the dear mother who had given him life, love and guidance, copious tears rolled down his cheeks.

"Tell me, Aunt Laura," he then asked huskily, "did she too fall a prey to this—this fiend?"

"Not directly, for your mother was afflicted with heart trouble, as you no doubt remember, but your father's sudden death undoubtedly hastened the paralytic stroke which ended her life."

"What a reckoning, then, with the monster," he said calmly, but the stern glance darting from his eyes belied this seeming tranquility. Mrs. Kean shook her head mournfully but only remarked:

"Well, my boy, this bitter cup cannot be avoided, the sooner you empty it, the better. I leave you with this legacy trusting fervently that it may not wreck your life. If you desire my presence or counsel, you will find me in the kitchen."

CHAPTER II.

A VOICE FROM BEYOND THE GRAVE.

When Mrs. Keen left the room, Richard resumed his seat, and gazed once more reverently and mournfully at the package containing his mother's last communications, probably coupled with requests and injunctions calculated to influence or even shape his entire future life. What would he learn regarding her innermost thoughts, the incidents of a spotless

life? Yes spotless; for Richard would have affirmed with a thousand oaths, yea, with his life, that no better woman than his mother had ever trod the earth. Her communication, then must necessarily be in harmony with her virtuous conduct, her pure and spotless character, and he then and there took the solemn vow, that, whatever the requests or commands of the departed saint might be, he would execute them faithfully, implicitly and to the fullest extent of his ability. After this mental vow a sweet calmness filled his soul, and, after one more kiss imprinted upon the address, Richard resolutely broke the seal and removed the cover.

The contents consisted of several manuscripts showing different handwritings belonging, to judge from the more or less faded writing, to different periods of the past. There was also a sealed letter in his mother's handwriting, addressed: "To my son Richard, but not to be read until after the perusal of the journal." Conquering his natural longing, and laying the letter reverently aside, the youth took the manuscript looking most affected by age and discovered at a glance that he really held in his hand the pencilings of his grandmother whom he recollected only very dimly, as she had died during his infancy. He opened the leaves and was soon deeply engaged in perusing the incidents of an eventful life. We would gladly make the reader a participator in this interesting pastime, were it not for the fact that the full rendition of the manuscript would greatly overreach the limits of this narrative, for which reason we must content ourselves with such extracts as are calculated to throw light upon matter necessary for a perfect comprehension of its contents. Without further comments we will let the writer speak for herself.

On Board the Sea Serpent, July 20th, 18—

A fair day. We have just risen from breakfast, and as I have fully recovered from sea sickness, I need not say that I enjoyed it. We are now in the channel of Mozambique, and the Captain says that we shall probably be in Calcutta in ten or eleven days, provided everything goes well. How I long, and yet dread, to be there. Long, because India if to be my

future home, holding in her lap all the weal and woe of my future life. Dread, because this future is so uncertain; because I will be compelled to leave, on our arrival in the port, this present asylum to face the world; a world so strange; a world moreover, said to be so cold, so cruel. And to meet it, I have only a few pounds in my purse and a recommendation to a lady whom I never saw, a lady possessed of wealth and influence, but also whims and caprices if the gossips are correct. No wonder, then, that I dread the arrival in the port.

11 A. M.—I have just come down from the deck, driven away by a strong gale and a drizzling rain. The Captain says all indication point to stormy weather, a prospect by no means pleasant, as it means probably a renewal of seasickness, if nothing worse. Indeed I even now feel a choking sensation in my breast and must cease writing.

July 22nd, On Board the Water Sprite.

What a change since my last writing. A shudder creeps over me, when I think of the experience of the last two days. My thoughts are so confused, my recollections so dim and imperfect, that I can give but a very incomplete description of the horrors through which I have passed. Nevertheless I will try. About an hour after I quit writing, the day before yesterday, the gale developed into a terriffic storm, which soon raised mountain-like waves and tossed the Sea Serpent about, as if she had been a cork. The Captain was compelled to abandon our course and run before the storm, to avoid being engulfed by the terrible waves washing continually over our deck as long as we pursued our course. I noticed that the Captain's face was very grave, and one of the passengers, a gentleman, informed us that the Captain feared to encounter shoals and sand banks which his chart showed to exist a few hundred miles ahead of us. I shall never forget the night which followed. The fear of a near disaster was made worse by the tortures inflicted by sea sickness. Indeed, so agonizing were these tortures that even the thought of death lost its terror. At the break of dawn I crept on deck assisted by the gentleman I mention above. We clung to the cables of the middlemast, and gazed shudderingly upon the raging sea around us. What would have been grand from a secure point of view, was now truly appalling. We had been on deck only a few minutes, when a sudden shock and a tremendous crash told us that the Captain's fear had been well founded and that we had indeed run upon shoals, but not sand-banks, as the charts indicated, but a rocky ledge which

soon stove in the bottom of our vessel. The next wave lifted us back into deep water, but the mischief had been done, for a hasty examination showed that the water was rushing into the hull, and that we would have to take to the boats, if we did not wish to be drawn into the vortex. I secured a little traveling bag, and was placed into one of the boats which left the steamer just in time to avoid the suction of the sinking vessel. At first we could see the other boats in our neighborhood, but the waves soon separated us from them, leaving us uncertain whether they were still tossed about like ourselves, or had been swallowed by the angry waters. I will not dwell upon the weary hours which followed. I expected every moment to be my last, indeed, I am even now incapable to comprehend how we escaped the gigantic waves which wet us to the skin and threatened to engulf us. We had no way of reckoning the time, as our watches had been disabled by the water, but it might have been about noon, when the winds began to abate, and the waves to assume smaller proportions. Two hours later the last trace of the storm had disappeared, excepting perhaps a deep and long round swell, looking like the last heavings of a giant after a mighty effort. Now the cravings of our nature made themselves felt, and everybody inquired for something to eat and drink. Fortunately a small keg with fresh water had been put into the boat before our departure from the steamer, and from it we now quenched our burning thirst. As to victuals, we were less fortunate. The accident had been too sudden and overwhelming, to permit of securing provision, and we now looked at one another with the pallor apt to blanch the cheeks when a famine or starvation threatens us. Fortunately the horrors connected with such privations were spared us, for just then the smoke of a steamer became visible on the horizon For awhile we wavered between hope and fear; but the vessel continued to come nearer, and at last our signals of distress were observed by the crew. An hour later we were taken on board the Water Sprite, a fine steam yacht owned by Mr. Harry Brown, and bound for the same port as the ill fated Sea Serpent. We were kindly treated by the wealthy owner, who, indeed, did everything to relieve our sufferings and supply the wants engendered by the shipwreck. Mr. Brown is a man of about thirty-five, of stately appearance though no remarkable beauty. In him, however, I recognized the truth of the adage that "Handsome *is* what handsome *does*." To me, the only female member of the rescued party, he has been more

than kind. Although unable to refurnish my wardrobe, he made his cook give up such garments, as were indispensible to my "debut" on deck. He has been very attentive, entertaining me with a recital of his numerous adventures, and driving away the recollection of the recent horrors by his wit and humor. Indeed, were it not that past experience had taught me wisdom, I would flatter myself to have made a more than casual impression upon the heart of our host.

July 24th. On Board the Water Sprite.

I have spent two very pleasant days since my last writing, thanks to the unceasing kindness of my host who spent nearly all his leisure hours, at my side. My companions in misfortune noticed his marked attentions, and banter me with what they term, "my conquest." Indeed, it takes all my force of will, and the constant admonition of prudence and common sense, to remind me of the fact, that it is not affection but the wish to while away a tedious hour which induces Mr. Brown to favor me with his company and attention. He is a very fascinating person, and it requires all these dictates of prudence to guard against conceiving more than a mere friendship for him.

July 27th. On Board the Water Sprite.

Am I dreaming, or is it really true that I am the happy wife of an amiable, nay lovable man? I must sometimes feel myself; pinch myself, to ascertain that I am really awake, a married woman, and the owner of millions, for be it said additionally, though by no means chiefly, that my husband is the owner of vast riches, so vast, indeed, that I can hardly fathom their extent. And all that came about in this manner:

Yesterday, Mr. Brown was with me as usual. After touching on various subjects, he began to give me a short history of his life. He told me that he is a native of Occidentia, where he even now possesses a large banking house, managed for him by a brother, with whom, however, he is not in great sympathy. He has been a rover of the world, and pretty well contented with his lot, excepting a certain void which he felt occasionally, and a yearning for domestic happiness which had been denied him. Looking at me intently, he continued: "Miss Mary, never before has this void been so marked as since the day I saw you first. Never before has a woman roused in me the feelings which you have awakened in my heart, and I shall consider our meeting truly provident

tial, provided that you can tell me that you share these feelings in a sufficient degree, to become my dear companion for life. 'Say, Mary,' seizing my hand, 'can and will you say yes.?'"

I felt a sensation of keen delight stealing over me, and it was merely the spirit of self-denial which caused me to reply: "But, Mr. Brown, you hardly know me! How do you know but I am a mere adventuress, unworthy of the love of a good man like you?"

"Tut, Tut! You know no more of me than I of you, and if you pretend to have discovered some goodness in me, I have probably divined you by that process. Come now and say that you will take Harry Brown with all he is and has, for your loving husband."

I have always been one of your impulsive creatures, and this manly open way of courting, pleased me. So I laid all false diffidence aside, and placing both my hands in his, said: "Mr. Brown, I reply as frankly as you asked; I have learned to love you with all my heart, and if you really are desirous of having such an insignificant mite of a thing, I give myself to you with all I am and have, which latter amounts to just five pounds, sixpence."

He laughed, then drew me into his embrace, and kissed me, saying: "A formidable item indeed, for which I will have to give you receipt, provided, you will permit me to invest it for you. But now, my dear girl, you must crown your goodness to me by consenting to become my wife without delay. You see, I have wasted so many years in bachelorhood, that I hate to lose one more. We are near the island of Yoko, where a good missionary, with whom I am acquainted, is trying to convert the thievish Malayan inhabitants to christianity. If we run in, he will only be too happy to make me happy; so be a good girl and say '*Yes.*'"

What could I do? When a man whom you love asks you to make him happy, and the accomplishment of such a favor is conducive to your own felicity, you are not likely to say "*No.*" Nor did I say no, and in consequence of my consent we steered toward Yoko, which we reached the evening before last. On our arrival, Harry ordered a boat to take us to the only little village which graces the island. We found Mr. Swift, the missionary, at home, and on Harry's request, he at once proceeded to tie the knot which was to make us one for the extent of our earthly career. He recorded our marriage in the registers of his little church. Two

of the crew of the Water Sprite witnessed the ceremony. I do not now remember their names, but this does not matter, as Harry knows them, and as we have secured a certificate from Mr. Swift. And now, am I happy? *Happy?* The name is hardly intense enough, to express the state of bliss in which I find myself. My pen fails to describe my feelings, so I give up the attempt. I hear Harry's voice, so I will quit for the present, and join him.

Calcutta, Aug. 15.—We have been here over a week, and I have hardly time to recover from the whirl of travel, the moving into lodgings, and the round of visits. The poor companion of a month ago, and the wife of Harry Brown, the millionaire are two very different persons and visitors have poured in upon us; invitations by the hundred have been received; all of them assuring us of the infinite pleasure it would give Nabob So-and-So, or Prince-what-you-may-call-him, to see us at his fete. I called upon Mrs S, the lady to whom I had been recommended, and, finding her absent, left both the letter of introduction and my card. The very next day my patron returned the call, overwhelming me with assurances of delight at making my acquaintance coupled with expressions of regret that my marriage had prevented her from proving how correctly her friends in England had judged her by entrusting my welfare to her keeping. She pleaded earnestly that I would not allow this marriage to interfere with the formation of a cordial friendship, closing with the offer of initiating me into the delights as well as the mysteries of Calcutta society.

All the rest of the people join in the attempt of turning my head, but thank heaven, I have sense enough to see that they worship Harry's golden calf, and not my humble self. I tell him so repeatedly, and on such occasions he laughs, calls me his sensible little wife, and declares that I judge these people too harshly, and that I am indeed the best—but hush—I would have to blush, if I put down here all the foolish pet names he calls me. And, am I happy? Well, that term hardly expresses my felicity, and I do not exaggerate in saying that there is not—there surely cannot be—a happier mortal on mother earth.

It is very hot here, but the rooms of our suburban villa are so large and high, so shady and well ventilated, that I am not seriously oppressed with the high temperature. Next week we shall start for the lower ranges of the Himalaya mountains, partly to escape the sickly influences of the sea-

son, partly to visit a magnificent estate which Harry possesses there and which lies adjacent to a gold mine he owns in that region.

April the 30th, 18—We are still in Golconda, as Harry calls our Paradise. I have spent here the happiest months of my life. Months (?) they seem weeks sharing with other happy periods; the quality evanescence. Still, the last week I have been even happier than before, for just seven days ago, on a Sunday morning, a child—a daughter—was born to me —nay to *us*, for are we not one, and is not Harry really the better part? A nobler man surely never lived, and sometimes I tremble at the thought, that so much happiness can scarcely last. Does not the German Bard sing: "Des Lebens ungenischte Freude wird keinem Sterflichen zu Theil?" True, I do not tremble at "der Goetter Neide," but it seems to me as if humanity could hardly endure such constant strain upon their nerve centers, and that such continued felicity must act upon our system much as the unmixed oxygen acts upon the rabbit, when compelled to inhale it,

It increases the capacity for enjoyment, but alas shortens its life. Still who would not rather have tasted the cup of perfect bliss and then die, rather than live forever, in dull apathy and a total unconsciousness of celestial joy? I, for my part, am willing to bow to any decree of fate, however severe, only—let it concern us both, for I think I could not give him up.

* * * THREE YEARS LATER. * * *

PARIS, May 20.

The gay metropolis of fashion has donned her spring dress, beautiful beyond conception, for here art has worked upon the charms of a lavish nature, until the combination is well nigh perfect. How different from the attractions of Calcutta. There it is Nature who has managed to conceal the indolence, the slovenliness and apathy of man, spreading over his bungling creations such a profusion of flowers, of perfume and of color, as to make a tolerably attractive picture. Sometimes I long for the charms of India, for it was there I found my Harry and the Eden in which only flowers have since grown, to adorn my path. Still, the interests of little Mary are paramount, and I can see why Harry insisted upon raising and educating her in a temperate clime and among people at once polished and scholarly. Paris certainly can claim these accomplishments, and we flatter ourselves to be able to coun-

teract the frivolity, levity and recklessness which the very air seems to breathe here. In fact, we can, and probably shall, withdraw from here, when Mary gets old enough to be affected by these moral taints. She begins to prattle very charmingly in French, not only with her carefully selected "bonne," but with Harry and me as well, for Harry has spent much of his life in France and speaks the language with ease and elegance. As to myself, I now bless the discipline of my school life, one thought so dreary and rigid. When I came here I had no facility of conversation, but the rules of French grammar, so thoroughly crammed into a rebellious memory in those obnoxious days, have borne rich fruit now and gained for me more than one compliment from the demoiselles and lions, "comme il faut" of the capital of fashion. As for myself, I care little for these compliments and less for the "societe recherchee" of this city. Indeed, were it not to please Harry, who insists upon an occasional offering at the shrine of the gay world around us, I would bury myself in the walls of the cottage which holds my husband and my child, *i. e.*, as the treasures making life worth living. True, I do not despise the riches of which we are possessed, for they enable me to raise my little daughter in health and comfort, and to adorn her mind with all the charms a thorough education can bestow. Compare the ease with which Mary picks up her French with the dreary drudgery of my school years. Yes, for her sake, and for that of dear Harry, I am glad of the millions at our disposal, although at times queer thoughts persist in crowding upon my mind. They assume the shape of strange queries, such as these: "Are we really entitled to so much wealth while millions slave to gain a scanty livelihood? True, we give largely to the poor, but is charity the just thing, when the question: "Are we not all brothers and sisters, born with equal rights and duties?" persists in staring us in the face? Harry laughs at me when I communicate to him such thoughts and scruples, and assures me that no tears of the oppressed, no groans of the wretched and curses of the starving, clings to his money. I know this is so; but I also know that capital takes an undue share of the profits of labor which produces all wealth, and such thoughts and doubts insist upon springing up in my mind, no matter how often I endeavor to banish them. Perhaps it is in this way: I pay my tribute to Nemesis, who cannot endure to see my horizon without a single cloud.

* * * * FIVE YEARS LATER. * * * *

VIENNA, April 23d, 18—

To-day is Mary's birthday, her ninth one, making her age eight, of course. How she has grown within the last years physically and mentally, for it is really true, what everybody says, namely, that our Mary is a very clever child. Nor do her studies seem to interfere at all with her bodily development, a circumstance which I attribute to the judicious course Harry, or rather we, pursue in imparting knowledge to the child. We still adhere to the old method of language lessons, with this difference only, that she now acquires the Teutonic tongue instead of French, which, however, is not allowed to be forgotten, as an unbending rule makes it the medium of conversation at meal times. She now rattles German as glibly as French and English, and pure German too, as we have been very careful to secure a companion from the North which speaks the language much more purely than the South. Mary's birthday was the cause of a little fete, to which a number of her friends were invited. We took the railway to a neighboring pleasure ground, where the little ones were as happy as the birds singing in the trees above their heads. Berlin may be more learned than Vienna, Hannover speak a more classic German; but Vienna surpasses them both by far in the great charms of every kind which benevolent nature has spread over her vicinity. Beautiful but thoughtless Vienna, never shall I forget the happy days I have spent within thy walls. They call thee "Klein-Paris," but while thy children resemble the Parisians in the love of pleasure, their gaiety is without frivolity, and their thoughtlessness without levity. I think with sorrow of the day which will part us, and yet I must make myself familiar with such thoughts of separation, for Harry thinks, it is about time, to shift the scene for a new chapter of instruction. This time it will be the sunny fields of Italy, where we shall seek to pitch our tent.

* * * * TWO YEARS LATER. * * * *

Berlin, September the 25th.

Last week we arrived in this metropolis of military power, the center of politics of the present age. It is not for this reason, however, that we have entered its precincts, for Harry and I are rather indifferent spectators of the political doings of the world, seeking our enjoyment, and indeed finding it,

within the confines of our little circle. Mary is now ten years of age, *i. e.*, just old enough to enter seriously upon a less erratic course of study than our rambling, though exceedingly pleasant mode of living was capable of affording. So we have sought the center of learning, the city claiming, and certainly deserving the merit of possessing the best schools of the world. Harry and I do not believe in private tuition, which, in our opinion, begets a seclusiveness, if not superciliousness much to be condemned. The mingling with children of all ranks and classes has about the same effect on a child, as the rubbing of a pebble against thousands of other pebbles in a river bed It makes it smooth, rubbing off all the rough edges. True, there is the danger of moral contamination, but this we hope to counteract by our advice, our influence and our example. We cannot rear a Chinese wall around our little one, and the merit of innocence secured by such a measure, if practicable, is more than doubtful. So we have sought the city which is always "on the Spree," though its inhabitants pride themselves upon being highly sober people. Nor do I doubt this in the least, for, if I may judge from the first impression, there is an air of reserve, of dignity and even coldness prevailing here which contrasts strangely with the sunny regions of Italy, the land of maccaroni, lazzeroni, ciceroni and other "onies," "too numerous to mention," as the auctioneer says. I liked it well enough, but cannot help thinking that its climate is apt to enervate, and to foster the culte of the idol so fervently worshipped there, the "Dolce Far Niente." Indeed, I fully agree with Harry, who thinks we would have been direlect of duty, if we had kept our precious charge there much longer. And now she is to enter upon a more serious course of study. Do I pity her? I hardly know. When I think of the dreary experience of my own school days, I cannot help a feeling of anxiety creeping over me; but, then, the circumstances are so different, the advantages in Mary's favor so great and decided, that I laugh at myself and quickly banish fears so totally groundless. Mary has much talent for music, and has already acquired considerable proficiency on the piano. Strange to say, the land of song and music no longer affords the best opportunities for gaining skill in that "art divine," excepting, perhaps, vocal culture, which Mary's tender age forbids. We have already engaged a first-class teacher of music, and to-morrow Mary will take her first lesson. I must confess that I feel a slight pang of jealousy, as, in this instance, I cannot aid him, being totally void, not of love for

music, but mechanical skill in its execution. Ah, me! why can I not be everything to the dear child?

* * * * SIX YEARS LATER. * * * *

CALCUTTA, October 15th, 18--.

What a change. Once more I see above me the azure sky of India; see the elephants carry their gaily decorated houdahs from place to place; watch the swarthy Hindoo with his scanty garments perform his tasks in the broiling sun, and witness all the other features of an oriental and tropical city. And yet, how different is everything from the period which gave me my husband and to us the precious treasure which casts sunshine upon every minute of our life. Mary, sweet Mary! No longer the child of Australia, Italy, or even Prussia, but a maiden on the verge of virginhood, a sweet rose-bud on the point of opening into the full flower, ready to spread fragrance over the neighborhood. They say Mary is beautiful, but be this as it may, I feel confident that those at least are correct that call her charming. I feel confident, moreover, that her father's wealth has not spoiled her, for, though we have never denied her such wants and wishes as were in accordance with her age and our own views of propriety, she has never been allowed to squander money foolishly. In fact, I doubt whether she has even an approximate idea of her father's wealth. Besides the innocence of her soul, the richness of knowledge and culture of her mind, form her chief attraction. Her love, indeed, is copious and widely extended. Besides speaking four languages fluently and correctly, she has a profound knowledge of mathematics and natural sciences, causing her to despise the superficial gossip of the world, and to seek and covet the company of persons genial in disposition and capable of imparting knowledge. Thus it is that the attention naturally paid to an heiress of such magnitude, has had no effect upon her. Fortune hunters are generally as varied as they are polished. Both Harry and I are highly gratified by this good taste and sagacity of one so young, although I shall soon be compelled to manage for a while, at least, without Harry's counsel, as he is settling his affairs in this country with a view of returning to Occidentia, his native land. He says: India is not the place for our Mary, the climate having the tendency to debilitate, and her polished male population bearing more or less the stamp of adventurers or fortune hunters. In other words, men among whom we would not

wish her to select a husband. I do not know how soon he can turn his estates into cash.

I have to laugh at myself for wishing sometimes he might be debarred or meet with obstacles, at least, as this would prolong his stay with us. He contemplates starting before us, to invest his wealth in bonds and securities of various nations, a design making his visit to such countries inevitable. We have gladly and cheerfully volunteered to accompany him in all his wanderings, but he thinks the fatigue would be detrimental to both Mary and me, for which reason he wishes us to remain here and await the "sesame" which will once more unlock Paradise for us, for, without our father and husband, Mary and I shall merely vegetate.

Calcutta, Feb. 12th, 18—

My diary has actually lain idle since the above entry. Reason: Harry left us a few weeks later, and I have not been in a mood to humor my fancies, much less deposit them in the bosom of this confidential friend. I now sit down, merely to make a few necessary statements. When Harry left, he took with him credentials for fully fifty million dollars, leaving only claims to the amount of $100,000 in my hands for collection. Before his departure he said laughingly: "Mary," meaning Mary Sr., of course, "here is some pin money for you and the baby, out of which you may pay your passage, and buy the few calico wrappers you two may need." The next week he took the steamer England, intending to go by way of the Suez Canal. The money was paid to me soon after, and deposited in a reliable bank, but when a week ago, we received papa's letter with the welcome mandate of "*Come*," I exchanged the cash for drafts on the Bank of England, which I have subsequently sewed in the waist of my traveling dress for safe keeping, reserving only enough to defray the expense of the voyage. We shall go by way of Capetown, and directly to Plutopolis, the metropolis of Occidentia, where Harry's brother is managing a banking house for him, or rather for himself, for Harry has never asked for an account, although his brother has not acted in a brotherly manner towards him. "We get along very nicely," he writes, which in a less magnanimous mind, might be interpreted: "He is the same old coon, but I do not mind his tricks." I wonder how I, or rather Mary and I, shall like this relative. Of course, for Harry's sake we would conceal our dislike, if he should inspire us with such feelings. Dear me, I am quite upset, and wish this journey were safely over, and we once more united with him who

is not only the guiding star, but the joy of our lives. Well, only a few more days, and we shall begin to make the transit. May lucky stars guide our course.

Plutopolis, Sept. 10th, 18—

My journal! With trembling hands I open thy soiled and briny pages, to read again the last entry before the beginning of that unlucky voyage which wrecked our vessel, and —oh, merciful heavens—may wreck the happiness of our lives, for thus far, we have not found the least trace of Harry.

I shudder at the recollection of the fearful scenes through which we have passed, and yet I long to record them here. Do I touch here one of the characteristics peculiar to the biped, called man? Is the desire to paint the trying event of the past week akin to the longing of the child to listen to ghost stories which make its hair rise and cause one shudder after another to creep over its body? Or is it the universal longing to gain some confidential friend, into whose ear we can pour our tales of woe? If it is this longing which now urges me to entrust to my faithful diary the narrative of our ordeal, it must at least be confessed that the selection is a proper one, for never has this friend upbraided me for any conceit my statements may have contained; never has he distrusted the veracity of my accounts or ridiculed the nature of my opinions or observations. Good friend, twin sister of my soul. Listen, then, to the story of the trials through which two feeble women have been compelled to pass. The first three weeks of the voyage were without any accidents. The Indian Ocean was as smooth as a mirror, while our steamer, the Albatross, plowed its bosom. At Cape Town we stayed two days, to give the ship time to take on board a large cargo of merchandise, destined for Plutopolis, and the passengers, to view the town and its curiosities. By this opportunity, both Mary and myself benefited extensively, spending more than half the time allotted us on land. On the morning of the third day we once more steamed into the sea, taking a northwesterly course. Again everything went on smoothly, and we flattered ourselves with the hope that we would arrive at Plutopolis without any of those lesser or greater mishaps which so frequently mar the pleasures of such voyages, when, just one week ago to-day, this hope proved fallacious, changing suddenly into dire and almost hopeless dispair. The day had been fine, and the sun set with a splendor, rare even in that resplendant latitude. We retired with a peaceful mind and contented heart, and the joyous anticipation of soon meeting our beloved one at the city for

which we were bound. What a frightful change a few hours later! It might have been ten o'clock, I shall never know for certain—when the cry of "Fire! Fire!" rang through the stillness of the night. At first I thought it was merely the fancy of a horrid dream, but was soon undeceived by a loud knock at the door of our cabin and the words: "Get up, ladies, quick! the ship is on fire." Of course we obeyed with alacrity still dazed with the suddenness of the revelation, failing to realize for quite a while the full extent of our peril. After dressing hurriedly, we hastened to the deck, which was the scene of wild commotion. The passengers looked like so many frightened sheep, huddled in heaps and groups, and the officers and crew running hither and thither, obeying the orders of the captain and carrying out such measures as he thought calculated to save the ship. A gentleman belonging to the group which Mary and I had joined, informed us hurriedly that the chances for such preservation were truly desperate,as the fire was raging furiously in the engine room, and that the danger of an explosion of the boilers was imminent. For this very reason the steam-pumps could not be used, and the vessel would probably soon refuse to obey the rudder. He advised us to prepare for the worst, and to put on one of the life preservers hanging in profusion about the deck. We hastened to do so, and both Mary and I were soon in possession of the article mentioned. Just then we heard the captain order his men to prepare the life boats for emergencies, provision them with water and eatables, and get them ready for lowering into the sea. Then an ominous hour followed, made almost unbearable by the uncertainty of our situation. The officers and crew worked with a will, now trying to quench the flames, now preparing the boats in case the vessel was doomed. At the expiration of that period, we heard the captain sing out: "All hands to the boats. Mr. Sanders see that the passengers are properly divided in the boats. Use due speed, my men, she will hardly float fifteen minutes."

And now, how can I describe the scene which followed? I must say in praise of the crew that they behaved with the coolness and collectiveness generally characterizing their profession; but the majority of the passengers lost all their presence of mind, and by their screams, their inconsiderate selfishness and desperate motions and gestures, made the task of the crew a doubly difficult one. As to myself, I was comparatively calm, but confess that it was more the stupor of bewilderment than any control I had over my limbs and nerves, which caus-

ed my stillness. My daughter, on the other hand, was not calm, but even cheerful, whispering now and then a word of encouragement in my ear,or clasping me soothingly in her arms. I do not remember, how the mariners at last succeeded in embarking the passengers. I know merely that we were conducted to the part of the railing above the boats ready to receive us. There were five of them, three of which had been filled and had pushed off, waiting for the others to follow. Mary was lowered before me, and I was preparing to follow, when the officers said with a sterness excusable under the circumstances: "This boat is full, take her to the next!"

For a moment I was inclined to give up in despair, and resist madly the attempt to separate me from my daughter, but, was it the recognition of the impossibility of enforcing my wishes, or Mary's sweet voice which bade me cheer and submit to the inevitable. At all events, I yielded to the hand that pushed me forward, and soon found myself seated in the boat which filled rapidly with passengers and a due allotment of mariners to manage it. A minute later we pushed off joining the other boats which lay in waiting. The Captain was on board our boat directing the movement of the little flotilla. Handing to one of his men a speaking trumpet, he ordered him to shout every few seconds as a rallying signal for the other boats, and then bade the rowers dip their blades. I sat near him, and overheard much of the conversation ensuing between him and an inferior officer, from which I learned the following: We were about five hundred miles from Plutopolis, and would have to steer in a northwesterly direction, to reach the city. Such, however, was not his intention. The strength of the crew would have hardly been equal to the task, to say nothing of the probability of squally weather during so long a voyage. He therefore resolved to steer for that part of the Atlantic swarming with vessels of every description, mediating the commerce between Europe and Occidentia. My heart quailed when I heard him whispering to the mate, that we were unfortunately full two hundred miles south of this watery highway, and that he was rather fearful that the unreasonableness of the passengers would give him much concern and trouble, in case their sufferings should be unseasonably prolonged. All this time I felt a dull apathy into which only now and then the consciousness of our separation flashed and wounded like a pointed dagger. Outwardly I remained calm, eliciting repeatedly a word of praise from the captain, who pointed me out as an example to the other passengers.

Thus, on we rowed, the trumpet sounding every few seconds and the forms of the other boats just dimly visible in the starry night.

As yet the air was calm and warm, but about one o'clock a breeze sprang up, which soon freshened into a wind, and then assumed the force of a gale. The waves began to roll, not high enough to endanger the safety of our little craft, but sufficiently high to make our position exceedingly uncomfortable. The passengers began to be sea-sick, the few children amongst them crying, and the adults vomiting in such close proximity to the well as to make the situation exceedingly disgusting, To make matters worse, the sky began to cloud up and a drenching rain to descend. But why dwell upon the horror of that night? Suffice it to say, that its hours seemed undeterminable, and that the first dawn of early morn was greeted by the wrecked mariners with a heartiness rarely equaled. Alas, the twilight, while ending the dreads of darkness, only brought to me the horrible discovery that the other boats had disappeared and that my Mary, my precious darling, was floating far from me on a treacherous element, only too ready to engulf her forever. I repeat: "Why dwell upon the further incidents and details of this sickening voyage, its perils, its horrors, its sickening stench, its tantalizing uncertainty will live forever in my memory." It lasted fully two days, showers and a dazzling and burning sunshine alternating with a cruel regularity, these changes soon creating sickness and physical suffering, giving a keener edge to the mental tortures to which we were exposed. At length—oh joy unspeakable! we discerned the smoke of a steamer on the distant horizon, a sight which did not only revive our hope, but lent new strength to the sinews of our weary mariners, who plied their oars with renewed vigor, to intercept the steamer's course. They were successful, for four hours later, we were taken on board the steamer, which proved to be the Dragon, one of the ships of a regular line plying between Liverpool and Plutopolis. Unfortunately she was bound eastward, necessitating an increase of the distance from our port. But how insignificant was this inconvenience when compared with the dreadful uncertainty of my daughter's fate which now began to torment me with double force? I shudder when I think of it, for I now feel, yea know, that I was actually on the verge of insanity during the remainder of this dreadful voyage.

The day after our rescue by the Dragon, we met another

vessel of the same line going west. The Captain signalled her to stop, and after a brief explanation of our case and wishes, we were transferred and taken to Plutopolis, where we arrived the night before last. Picture my excitement and my delight, bordering on frenzy, when, on entering the harbor and passing a sailing vessel just arrived, I perceived Mary, my darling Mary, standing on board the latter, evidently preparing to disembark. The two vessels passed at a distance of several hundred feet, but so wild and piercing was the cry which I uttered in making this discovery, that Mary turned and saw and recognized me. An hour later, we lay in one another's embrace, experiencing that sweet solace filling our souls, when after some trying ordeal, we enter the port of safety. Indeed, this reunion has in a measure repaid us for all our suffering, and if we only succeed in finding Harry soon, and in good health, I shall become reconciled to the terrible catastrophe of the past week, as it has proved to both of us with renewed force and vigor, that our three lives are a unit indispensible for happiness.

We have engaged rooms in an up-town hotel, and to-morrow shall renew the search for my husband, who can hardly escape our vigilance, as millionaires are not the fry apt to be lost in the turmoil of a metropolis. I wrote to Harry our intention of sailing with the Dragon, which accounts for his failure to make his appearance, although the papers gave a full account of the catastrophe as also our rescue, making it rather strange that he did not hurry to our abode. Well, he may be absent on business which brooked no delay. It is thus that Mary—ah! that reminds me, that I have forgotten to record how the dear child fared after her separation from me.

From what she told me, her experience during the night was much like my own. When, on the arrival of early dawn, she failed to perceive the boat containing me, she also was seized with a feeling very similar to despair; but unlike mine her trials were much shortened by the sight of a trading vessel early in the morning. It sailed under all the canvass it could muster; but so slow was its progress, that the oarsmen of the boat found no difficulty in overtaking it. It proved to belong to the West India flotilla which carries the produce of Cuba and the other Antilles to Plutopolis and the manufactories of Occidentia to the Antilles. The Captain was a rough but kindhearted man, who made his guests as comfortable as circumstances would allow. A tedious voyage of fully five days brought them finally to Plutopolis, where the dreads of loneli-

ness and sudden want was fortunately terminated by our meeting. This reminds me of the necessity of at once replenishing our wardrobe, which went down with the burning steamer, leaving us both so totally destitute of garments of every kind, as to exclude even a walk in the streets or a ride in the horse cars. I hear a knock—ah! Mary tells me that a trader in all kinds of women's wear, is waiting in the sitting room to receive my orders. You see, dear Journal, that this announcement is an unimpeachable excuse for closing this effort, so farewell!

Sept. 17th. Another week has passed without bringing the least sign of life from Harry, and a terrible fear begins to oppress me. Of course, I battle against it, and Mary, poor Mary, invents daily a thousand reasons why he fails to make his appearance; but she does it evidently to comfort me, and with so poor a show of courage, that I plainly see the condition of her mind. We have been to all centers of trade and finances; we have advertised in all the papers, but without even the shadow of success. The strangest thing of all is that nobody seems to know anything about a millionaire, Harry Brown, and more than once I have discovered strange expressions in the eyes of the parties whom we asked, as if they thought our minds deranged.

Fortunately the sum which Harry left me for collection secures us against all want, although the cash I retained for traveling purposes has been exhausted, making the realization of the drafts at an early date necessary. I detest the very idea of taking steps suggesting the possibility of Harry's prolonged absence; or—or—death!

October 30th.—Dear mamma is unable to write papa's continued absence and silence having prostrated her to such an extent as to permit neither physical nor mental activity. So she commissioned me to make some entries in her beloved journal. This is indeed a rare favor and would be more fully appreciated by me if I had not to record such sad facts and incidents. Papa lost—Heaven forbid, *for life*—that is the mournful thought which clothes everything else in deep mourning, and makes the recording of the events of the last five weeks an irksome task. I might, therefore, have declined if mamma's request did not plainly originate from the wish of diverting my mind for the one sad thought alluded to. So, to humor her, I take the pen to state that we are no longer in the hotel, but reside in our own home, purchased with part of the money left us by papa. His disappearance has been some-

what softened by the fact that our misfortunes and strange fate have gained us several warm friends, whose motives are totally disinterested, and who have not only given us sound advice, but rendered highly efficient aid. It was one of them who counseled the purchase of this house which lies in one of the suburbs of Plutopolis, but is so situated that we can reach the business center, by means of a street car line, in less than half an hour. This friend urges mamma to invest the remainder of our little fortune in a similar manner, as the renting of the houses would insure a higher percentage on the money than otherwise possible. He was here last night, but came near provoking a mortal feud by hinting at the possibility of papa's absence and silence being intentional. Both mamma and I rose when Mr. Comfort, (that is his name) uttered the insinuation alluded to. "You do not know my husband?" mamma cried with flashing eyes, "or you would not have allowed such thoughts to enter your mind. It is this fact alone which prompts me to forgive you; but if you value our regard, do not breathe a second time a thought polluting the memory of the noblest man that ever lived."

I remained silent, but my looks must have seconded mamma so effectually that Mr. Comfort considered it prudent to abandon his position, at least as far as the proclamation of it is concerned. Still, he continued to urge the purchase of the real estate with such vigor and good sense, that mamma yielded to his persuasions and begged him to make the necessary inquiries. This he promised to do, and we expect him this afternoon or evening to make his report. But where is papa? Where can he be? Strangers who do not know him may entertain the idea that selfish reasons induced him to abandon us; but we who know him; we who have known, loved and cherished him so many years, are so deeply imbued with the conviction of the utter impossibility of such a conduct on his part, that the very remonstrance against such an insinuation seems preposterous to us. If my good and noble father does not return to us, we both feel convinced that only the cold embrace of death prevents his return, and this conviction, shocking though it be to our loving hearts, is a thousand times more comforting than the thought that he could live and stay away from us, attracted perhaps, by powerful but unholy charms.

October 31st.—Mr. Comfort was here last night, according to agreement, and laid before us a list of houses for sale. He pointed out the advantages of each and then gave his counsel

as to the selection most advisable. He pointed out the fact that mamma ought to select such as would bring not merely the largest rent, but also the greatest probability of renting permanently. Taking both these points into consideration, mamma finally selected one or two stores and several dwelling houses, whose rooms can be furnished and let to single persons. One of these, a central one, mamma chose for her future residence, as the necessity of collecting the monthly rents would make such a step desirable. We both shrank a little at the publicity of such an abode, but necessity knows no law; nor need this arrangement be continued after papa's return, which we still expect and hope for with every fiber of our soul.

December 1st.—No trace of papa yet; I write this tearfully, but with a composure which I deemed impossible a month ago. Perhaps the necessity of supporting mamma's failing frame imparts to me a strength which otherwise might be lacking. The very fact that she no longer takes comfort in her journal, shows plainly and painfully how this terrible blow has crushed her. She walks, talks, eats and drinks much like an automaton, and her eyes have that far-off look, indicating the absence of one's thoughts. The care for her undoubtedly is beneficial to me, acting much as a conductor, removing the pangs of an excessive affliction. On the whole, she is improving, and I sincerely trust that time, the balmy healer of all woes, will bring to her sorrowing soul the relief which makes life not merely endurable, but enjoyable.

Mamma reserved enough money to furnish our house comfortably and buy a fine piano for me, as my proficiency on that instrument is too valuable an acquisition to be lost by want of practice. I stated before that our strange and sad fate procured for us the friendship and regard of several worthy families, all of which vie with me to cheer mamma and make her forget the only and all-absorbing thought of her soul. Among them are several estimable and highly amiable young ladies, who soon became my friends, and often call to cheer me, as they say, and to hear at the same time my playing and singing, both of which they are kind enough to pronounce excellent. It would be foolish for me to pretend that I am not aware of my skill and execution on the piano, and the sweetness and strength of the voice with which mother nature has endowed me. I have received instruction in singing and playing from the best teachers of Europe, and when I add that this instruction extended over more than six

years, I need hardly add that it would be very strange indeed, and by no means complimentary to my diligence and perseverance, if I had not risen above mediocrity. I think it very silly for young ladies to force an inferior skill upon society, but regard it as equally foolish to hide, from pevishness or false modesty, talents calculated to entertain and elevate. So I always play or sing when my friends ask me, a readiness which has secured me several pupils. I do not mean to intimate that I have chosen and entered upon the profession of teaching, my pupils being only a few friends or young ladies introduced to me by such. The rent of our houses amply supplies our modest wants, but it is quite a charm and satisfaction to me to add to the sums which, when compared with those formerly at our disposal, sink into utter insignificance. The rooms of our second and third stories are now all rented, and although several chamber maids have been engaged to keep them in order, I cannot help noticing and studying our lodgers. Several of them are certainly original, while others are either attractive or fortunately in only a few instances, repulsive. I do not pretend to be a soul reader, but the character or disposition of some persons is so legibly written on their features, that even a little goosy like myself cannot help reading it. I will mention a case of both kinds, both young men of rather a prepossessing appearance and polished manners. They gave mamma their cards when they first engaged rooms in our house, a circumstance enabling me to name them. The attractive one is called George Woods, and as the description of the good qualities with which my fancy has imbued him, is a pleasant task, I shall begin with him. Mr. Woods is nearly or quite six feet high, and his figure is unusually well proportioned. He walks erect, as if to say to the world: "Here I am, ready to battle with you and to conquer you if I have half a chance." He is of the blonde type, *i. e.*, one in which we frequently find a good deal of vapidity and shallowness. With Mr. Woods, however, this is not the case. His step has a firmness which indicates decision and readiness in emergencies. I have only heard him speak once, but his voice is pleasant as if coming from an honest and sincere source. He lifts his hat when he passes me in the hall, but this and a polite salutation are all the intercourse I have with him. The other party is a Mr. Cheatham, Josephus Cheatham, I think his card makes him. Cheatham: Is there anything in a name? I did not use to think so, but this Mr. Cheatham looks to me as if he would cheat you at the first chance he got and feel no

scruple in consequence, either. I may wrong him and would not say this to any one except my bosom friend, the Journal, which possesses discretion, in an unusually high degree. Mr. Cheatham is personally even more handsome than Mr. Woods, but his beauty is that of the snake, which glitters but disgusts, or that of the tiger, whose veiled eyes become volcanoes when provoked, and whose velvet claws tear and rend, under similar circumstances. Of course he has neither looked daggers at me, nor inflicted wounds with his claws, *i. e.*, neatly gloved hands; but he has looked at me with glances so insinuating and inquisitory that I had to lower mine and have ever since avoided meeting him in the hall or sitting room, which latter apartment he visits more frequently than necessary, clothing such visits in the garb of business with mamma. On such occasions he has once or twice accosted me, but my replies have invariably been so chilly and monosyllabic, that even a bolder man than Mr. Cheatham might have deemed it prudent to discontinue such attempts. I think mamma shares my repugnance to this man, although her preoccupation has probably prevented her from knowing her own feelings on this point. Well, I have really done Mr. Josephus more honor than he deserves, so I shall dismiss him now and for all time to come. I will only add that both these gentlemen are clerks in a banking house only a few steps from our house, a circumstance which probably induced them to domicile themselves with us.

Dec. 20th. Still no tidings of the lost one! Alas! will it be destined to continue forever this same sad cry of yearning and baffled affection? Even mamma seems to have given up all hope, and a sad resignation has taken the place of the former wild grief and desolation Well, mournful as the sight is, it is far better than the distraction that was so vividly depicted on her countenance.

Yesterday Mr. Woods spent an hour in our sitting room, but it was by mamma's request that he deviated from his usual respectful reserve. The banking house of Halleck Bros. is so conveniently located for our monetary affairs, that mamma has resolved to patronize the firm, and for that reason requested the presence of Mr. Woods My former estimate of him has become confirmed by this interview Indeed, I have discovered new traits of merits or rather excellence, which mere observation could not well discover. I was playing when he knocked at the door, which circumstances led to an apology for the interruption and his confession of great fondness for music. Mamma was not in the room just then, and during her

absence we exchanged a few remarks which hinged naturally on music and informed me of the fact that Mr. Woods is himself an adept, or, as he styled it, bungler on the violin. I told him that I had some exquisite duetts for piano and violin, and offered my assistance, in case he saw proper, to try them. He professed himself delighted with the prospect, and when mamma, who entered at this moment, invited him cordially for some musical impromptus, he readily accepted. He will be here this evening, so I will have to quit and get the music ready. Strange to say, Mr. Cheatham's name was not mentioned in the interview, and I have a vague idea that the relations between the two young men are not the most cordial, a circumstance caculated to increase my respect for Mr. Woods. I meet the other very rarely now, but cannot avoid him altogether without appearing rude, for which manifestation of dislike he has not given me sufficient cause, although the vulgar familiarity of his look at our rare encounters, raises my ire and temper to resent indignantly the insinuation implied.

Dec. 21st. Mr. Woods made his appearance according to agreement, and a very pleasant evening was spent in his society. He plays the violin with considerable skill, and although he could hardly be called a virtuoso on the instrument, his playing is so full of feeling and comprehension, as to make up for any little defects his execution may possess. In the pauses he engaged mamma and me in conversation, and betrayed so much originality of thought and variety of information, that the minutes passed—not only with unwonted rapidity, but that mamma suffered herself to be aroused to a degree of interest which both surprised and delighted me. Mr. Woods was invited to repeat his visit, and it is probable that a regular musical once-a week soiree will result from this embryo. * * * * While writing the above I was interrupted by a knock at the door, and upon my "Come in!" Mr. Cheatham entered the room. He wished to pay his month's rent he said, handing the money to mamma, who gave him the customary receipt. He lingered after this, offering some remarks on the weather, and next volunteered the information that he had heard the music last night and been charmed by it. If he expected that this information would lead to an invitation on mamma's part, he was mistaken, for she replied in brief platitudes, and finally returned his goodbye with a relief fully shared by myself.

Jan. 2nd, 18— The suspense is over; never again shall

we lay eyes upon dear papa! It seems cruel, that I can write these lines without giving way to an outburst of grief, but I have to do my crying in secret, as mamma has relapsed into all the former paroxysms of grief and any open lamentations upon my part might prove the feather needed to crush her under the burden of agony and cloud forever a mind both bright and noble. It was three days ago, that the long expected and yet so sudden and terrible thunderbolt descended upon our home which had begun to assume an aspect of tranquility, soothing but treacherous. We have changed roles now. The protectress has become the ward, and oh! sad as the occasion is, it makes me infinitely happy to be able to pay back in driblets the ocean of kindness shown to me by this darling mother in happier days. I am ably seconded by Mr. Woods who, in some way or other has become quite a feature of our little circle. If I were asked, how it came about, I would have to confess ignorance; but it is certainly a fact, that Mr. Woods or George, as we generally call him, has become an element, if not necessity in our lives. It is through him, or rather in consequence of our acquaintance with him, that we have discovered papa's death. It is a strange story, which I shall put down here, painful though it is, for I have long since begun to understand the charm which these confidential pencilings exercise upon a body. Whenever something unusual occurs I am drawn as by a magnet to this Journal and always feel greatly relieved after unburdening my mind.

Last Saturday mamma sent me to the bank of Halleck Bros. to deposit some money. On entering the room I found the place at the window vacant; but perceiving the door to the private office ajar, I walked to the rear of the apartment, and pushing back the door a little further, bent forward to cast a glance into the office and see whether I could discover Mr. Woods or some other clerk of the bank. It was empty, but, on the wall right opposite the entrance, I perceived a life size portrait which caused me to utter a low cry of surprise and then to grasp the door frame in support, as I felt my senses leaving me, and lost all control over my limbs. Fortunately George made his appearance at this critical moment. Noticing my agitation, he sprang forward, supported my tottering frame, and said, leading me to a chair: "Miss Mary, what ails you? Are you sick? Can I do anything for you? Permit me to get you a glass of water." By this time I had recovered my self-possession, though by no means my mental poise. Rising and pointing to the portrait, I said with a

feverish excitement which probably vibrated in every syllable: "Mr. Woods,—George,—how—how—did that portrait get into this room?" The young man evidently considered me the victim of a fever, for he came forward once more and said soothingly: "You are not well, Miss Mary, permit me to lead you home." I merely made a gesture of impatience in reply, and pointing rather imperiously to the portrait, repeated: "How did it come here?"

"Why, very naturally," the young man replied wonderingly. "It is the portrait of Mr. Harry Halleck, the brother and silent partner of Mr. James Halleck."

"You lie," I cried violently. "That portrait is the likeness of my father. I sank back into the chair from which I had risen in my excitement. My eyes closed in utter exhaustion, filling the young man with increased alarm, for he came still nearer and seized my hand, a liberty upon which he would never have ventured in calmer moments, cried entreatingly, "Miss Mary, you are certainly sick, please permit me to see you safely home; I can and will afterwards answer any questions you may see proper to make."

"Not before I learn what right you, or rather your employer has to my father's portrait. Tell me instantly, or—" At this moment the door connecting the office with the inner bank room, opened and Mr. Cheatham appeared. His presence affected me like an electric shock, and gave back to me in an instance the control over my nerves. I made a powerful effort to hide the terrible excitement under which I had been laboring all this while, and succeeded sufficiently to allege a sudden violent sick spell as the cause of my exhaustion. He expressed his regret and offered in turn his services as an escort. This offer completed my recovery. Rising and thanking him coldly for this mark of courtesy, I told him that I had already accepted the services of Mr. Woods, and then with a low obeisance left the office. I took the proffered arm of my companion, but remained silent until we had reached our sitting room. Shutting its door I made sure that mamma was not in hearing distance, and then walking close up to the young man said almost fiercely, "Well?"

Again he took my hands, gave them a pressure and said reproachfully, "why, Mary, you talk to me as if I were your mortal enemy. Are you not aware that I would give half my life to make you happy?"

In spite of my excitement, these words sent a thrill through my body, a thrill whose nature I did not take the

pains to analyze then; but my accents grew imperceptibly softer as I resumed: "Well, why then do you keep me in this painful suspense? Did I not tell you that the portrait in the office is the likeness of my father?"

"And you are sure, Mary, that you do not talk in a fever?"

"Tut," I replied more forcibly than elegantly, "I have no more a fever than you, and am in the full and unimpaired possession of my mental faculties, when I tell you that the portrait in the office is the likeness of my father."

"But your father's name is Brown, you know," Mr. Woods remonstrated; "how, then, do you account for this apparent incongruity?"

"I cannot account for it," I said impatiently, "but that does not matter, for I am not, cannot be mistaken. But now tell me quick, where is he? I mean the original of the picture?"

A shadow passed over the face of the young man and he replied with much hesitancy, "The original of that portrait, Mary, is dead."

"Dead!" I echoed, laying my hand upon my breast to stifle a sudden pain in my heart. "Dead? Oh, that accounts for it. I see it all, now. And when—when did he die?"

"About four or five months ago," he said musingly. "But—"

"Hush," I cried, "I hear mamma's voice. She must know nothing of this until all doubt and uncertainty has been removed. Can you give me a few minutes this evening?"

"It is entirely at your disposal."

"Very well. Good bye—you had better retire before mamma comes in and asks questions." He withdrew, leaving me the prey of the chaos of conflicting thoughts and emotions. To make matters worse, I had to repress them and preserve a calm and even cheerful appearance for mother's sake. In the evening Mr. Woods made his appearance, but mamma was so constantly in the room that we found no chance for the contemplated interchange of thoughts. I was meditating some ruse to secure the wished for tete-a-tete, when Mr. Woods came to the rescue, asking me whether I had heard the famous preacher that now stirred up the society of Plutopolis to its very depth. Mamma here interposed, asking the young man banteringly whether he was ignorant of the fact that we—meaning herself and me—were hopelessly tainted with skepticism?

"I have at least an inkling of the fact," he replied with a

smile. "Nevertheless I venture to invite Miss Mary, at least, to hear Mr. Slamdidge to-morrow. She is not so hardened a case, you know, and the tremendous sledge-hammer blows of the Evangelist may break the crust at some weak spot."

How can I describe the mixture of feelings with which I listened to these words. To banter with a bleeding heart; to deceive her whom I loved with every fibre of my heart. Direful necessity; yet necessity, for under no circumstances would I dare to expose dear mamma to the baneful uncertainty then torturing my heart. She was evidently astonished when I accepted Mr. Woods' invitation, alleging as a reason my desire to study this interesting phase of infatuation. Our visitor did not stay long, and we retired soon after his withdrawal, a violent headache with which I really suffered, forming an excellent excuse for an early retirement. On the next morning Mr. Woods appeared at ten o'clock, and we at once started on our errand. The church bells were ringing; the quiet streets, the gaily dressed people, everything in fact bore the garb of cheerfulness, contrasting strangely with the tumult within me. We had hardly withdrawn to a safe distance when I looked inquiringly in my companion's face, merely uttering the monosylable, "Well?"

George reflected a moment and then said hesitatingly: "Miss Mary, I have made some inquiries in this strange affair and discovered that there may indeed be some foundation for your supposition. The janitor of the bank has been with the firm for many a year, and when I cautiously touched upon the olden times, he told me that the maiden name of Mr. Halleck's mother had been Brown, and that—" I interrupted him with a low cry, for the conviction of the correctness of my supposition brought, as a matter of course, the consciousness of my dear father's death, that is, his irrecoverable loss to my mother and myself. When he paused, sympathizingly, I struggled for self-possession and urged him on by saying: "Proceed."

"Well, old Tompkins informed me that there had never been much love lost between the two brothers and that one day, it must have been fully twenty-five years ago, Harry, the younger brother, suddenly disappeared, leaving no token of his intentions. Nor did he ever write, to Tompkins' knowledge, or return until he suddenly loomed up about six months ago. James, that is the other brother's name, did not seem to be over-much enjoyed at Harry's return, but the latter acted so friendly and disinterestedly that a cordial relation between the two was established. I infer from Tompkins' rambling communications

that the bank really belonged to the younger brother, having been started with a legacy left him by an uncle after whom he had been named. I mention this to make you understand the true relations of the two brothers. Mr. Harry Halleck was a daily visitor at the bank, taking up his quarters in a few chambers of the second story furnished bachelor fashion, when his sudden death put a new phase upon the entire situation." He stopped, probably induced by the convulsive twitching of my hand, which I could not entirely suppress. He gazed at me compassionately and resumed: "I wish I could spare you this pain, Miss Mary, but your own injunctions prevent it, please remember this, if what I have to tell you wounds your feelings."

"I understand; please proceed."

"Well, one morning we were shocked by the communication of the janitor who rushed into the bank and informed us, that Mr. Harry was lying dead in his bed, killed, no doubt, by the escape of gas. It was indeed, the smell of gas, which was the cause of the sad event. The janitor, perceiving it to issue from Mr. Halleck's room, had ventured upon entering, with the terrible result I mentioned."

Again he stopped, this time interrupted by the violent manifestations of grief I could no longer control and hide. Bursting into sobs, almost convulsive in their vehemence, I disregarded place and time, and thought just then of nothing but the untimely end of one of the best of men. Mr. Woods had probably forseen something of the kind, for he had chosen a lonely street which widened at that place into one of the little parks adorning the city. He wisely forebore comforting me in words, but the pressure of his arm on my hand tightened and leading me to one of the benches of the resort, standing in a cluster of evergreens, he made me sit down, remaining silent until the first paroxism of grief had subsided. When my sobs had lost their convulsive character, I apologized for drawing him into a grief foreign to him, but he protested so earnestly against the idea of his being a stranger that I ceased, relapsing into a silence filled with thoughts, sad to bitterness. Suddenly, however, I was startled by the recollection that this conduct was selfish; that there was a being left to me to whom these dreadful news must be broken, and gently broken, if she should not sink under the blow.

"Mr. Woods—George,"—I said, under the impression of this thought "I have no claim upon you, but, oh, do not desert me in this trying hour. What am I to do? How am I to impart

this shocking news to mamma? Oh, help me, help me." These entreaties seemed to touch him almost painfully. Seizing both my hands in his he exclaimed: "Mary, how can you talk that way? How can you consider as a painful task a privilege dearer to me than life itself? This is not the time to worry you with a declaration of the feelings with which you have inspired me, but rest assured that there is no pleasure this world could offer which can at all compare with that of serving you."

His words were so earnest that they carried the conviction of their sincerity with them. And why deny it? They touched me very sweetly in that hour of distress and poured healing balm into my troubled soul. I could not abstain from pressing his hands, and then withdrawing mine, said: "I thank you, George. Rest assured that these words of comfort will never be forgotten. But now tell me, what shall and must I do? You are the only one I have to counsel me."

"I am only sorry," he replied, "that I cannot give you the experience of riper years, but let me see: There are some main points which we must not lose sight of. First, and foremost, we must make perfectly sure of the identity of the portrait before we venture upon breaking the news to your mother."

"But how can this be done without letting your mother see the likeness?"

"Oh, as to that, there is no neccessity whatever. Remember that I left my father not many months ago, and preserve a very vivid recollection of his features. When was this portrait painted?"

"During the first weeks after his arrival. I heard him tell his brother also, that it was intended as a pleasant surprise to distant friends."

"Did you never hear him speak of being married?"

"Never, but that is not conclusive, as I did not hear him speak a hundred words."

"Well, nevertheless the circumstantial evidence is too conclusive, to be overlooked: The name of Harry Brown, the fact of his having been absent for twenty-five years; the wealth possessed by both papa and Mr. Halleck; I think there can be little doubt even to strangers of the identity of the two. As to myself, I am perfectly and irrefutably convinced."

He reflected a moment, then said: "You are right, Miss Mary, and this settles our course in regard to your mother; but I must confess that I am considerably in the dark as to

the best course concerning Halleck. Remember, there are millions, and *many* millions involved in this matter, and we must be both cautious and circumspect, to secure to yourself and your mother the fortune rightfully belonging to you."

"Why, George, you do not think that Mr. Halleck could be mean enough to reject our claims when put into the proper light?"

George seemed slightly embarrassed. "I dislike to speak ill of others, and therefore say, I would be very glad to see Mr. Halleck do the right thing. But Mary, one cannot be constantly in a bank, without becoming painfully aware of the baneful influence of gold. Indeed, I would not be very much surprised to see him disregard the ties of kinship, and the dictates of conscience, when millions are at stake."

"Then, what do you think we had better do?"

"Let me see; first, we will have to establish the identity between Mr. Harry Brown and Mr. Harry Halleck. This once accomplished, the rest would be comparatively easy. Of course, your mother has a certificate of marriage?"

"Certainly, that is—let me think. She had a certificate, for I have read it more than a dozen times, but it was packed with our baggage and lies now at the bottom of the Atlantic ocean."

"But she can easily procure a duplicate. Where were your parents married?"

"On the little island of Yoko in the Indian ocean."

"And by whom there?"

"A Mr. Swift, who stayed there in the capacity of missionary. Both papa and mamma told me often, that they were married in the little church of the only place on the island."

"Mr. Swift, missionary, Island of Yoko, Indian Archipelago," repeated George, making a memorandum of these names in his note book. "I am glad we shall find no difficulty in securing a duplicate of the lost certificate, in case we need it. In fact I may as well see about this without delay. I shall continue to ply old Tompkins for further information, as far as propriety and prudence permit, for something tells me that the greatest discretion will have to be exercised in this matter. If I were in your place I would not breathe this discovery to anybody, and enjoin the same secrecy upon my mother. And now, shall we return to the house and speak the news to your poor mother? Remember, it must be done

some time, and the sooner it is done the sooner you will be relieved of a heavy burden."

He was right and I told him so. We rose and returned home, our steps, however, slackening perceptibly on reaching our premises. Mother met us in the hall, and expressed much wonderment at our early return. "Was the discourse of the Rev. Slamdidge not to your liking?" she banteringly inquired, making me feel like a guilty criminal on the point of confession. But why repeat the dreadful scene ensuing? I shudder at the mere recollection and have not the heart to paint in detail the agony of my beloved mother. Let it suffice to state that I succeeded, with George's assistance, in breaking the news, without at the same time breaking her heart. For hours, however, she refused to be comforted, uttering incessantly the name of the departed and yielding finally more to the dictates of an exhausted nature than to those of reason. I almost forced her to lie down a few hours, George remaining in the house all the while and supporting me with his sympathy and his counsel. About six o'clock mamma suddenly appeared in the sitting room and exclaimed on entering: "George, take me to the picture, for I must see it. Nay, do not refuse me, for if you do, I shall call on Mr. Halleck to-morrow morning and ask the same privilege from him." Neither George nor I made the attempt to dissuade her, for we read in her eyes and countenance that she would not listen to reason, or be refused. So George said promptly: "Well, Mrs. Brown, if you must see the portrait, I must devise some means without arousing the suspicions of the inmates of the bank. Fortunately I have the keys for the back door leading into the office But I shall precede you fully half an hour, for it would never do to expose your and Mary's reputation to the gossip of the city. It will soon be dusk. You can reach the bank from the alley running back of these houses. Wrap yourselves in some shawl or cloak, leave your house through the court and walk to the rear of the bank, where I shall be in waiting."

He left us without further parley, and half an hour later we followed his example, gliding unobserved first into our court yard, and thence into the alley beyond. Creeping in the deeper shadows of the buildings, we soon reached the lot on which the bank is located. A high board fence separates it from the alley, and at the gate leading into the court we found George who led us stealthily to the rear of the bank and then into the back office. Here he struck a match, and then lit a lamp. As soon as the apartment was lit, mamma began

to look around and before long her eyes fell upon the portrait. Our communications had naturally prepared her for the sight; but so life-like was the picture, and so perfect the imitation, that the aspect nevertheless completely overwhelmed her. "Harry!" she cried piteously, stretching her hands towards the picture in a beseeching manner, and then sank into a chair, sobbing hysterically, as if her heart would break. Neither George nor I attempted to comfort her, judging, and rightly, that a total abandonment to her sorrow would most rapidly abate its vehemence. For fully fifteen minutes the sobs continued without any sign of abatement; then they shook her frame merely at intervals and ten minutes later she had regained sufficient composure to speak. Stretching her hand towards the portrait she exclaimed with unexpected energy; "Mary, that picture must be mine. To-morrow I shall ask the owner for its price, and I shall purchase it, no matter what he may demand."

"Well," said George, evidently deeming it prudent not to contradict her, "of that we had better speak more at leisure at your house. The janitor might surprise us here if we stayed much longer, an occurrence which must be avoided at any cost."

Mamma seemed to comprehend the full force of this remark, for she rose and said resignedly, "Let us go then."

We accomplished our retreat in safety and both George and I breathed a sigh of relief, when we reached the shelter of our own house. It was only after the fortunate termination of our venture that we saw the full magnitude of the risk we had run. On mamma the sight of the picture had a salutory effect It probably made her grief more pointed, but it also made it less shadowy, and therefore more easy to combat. Still she talked of nothing but the purchase of the picture, until George was compelled to say kindly, but with firmness: "Mrs. Brown, I doubt very much, whether Mr. Halleck would sell that portrait under any consideration, but I fear, that you would be the last person into whose hands he would allow it to fall."

"But why, Mr. Woods?" Mamma inquired, opening her eyes wonderingly. George then proceeded to explain to her the main features of our discoveries, and closed by saying: "It is to be feared that Mr. Halleck will dispute your claim to any kinship with him, and what is more, your claim to your husband's fortune. By such a rash step as you intend to make, you would put him on his guard, and enable him to re-

fute your claim. This had the desired effect, but the wish to possess the portrait was too potent to be abandoned at once; so she said: "Perhaps you are right, Mr. Woods. Indeed, I see, you are, and thank you sincerely for the kind interest you take in us and our affairs; but can you think of no way, in which we could secure a copy of the portrait, without the owner's knowledge?"

"That might perhaps be done, although such an undertaking would certainly be very difficult, to say nothing of the necessity of hiding the copy, to avoid scandal and gossip. But it is late. Permit me to retire with the sincere hope that time will enable you to bear your great affliction with fortitude and patience."

Aug. 1st. Excuse me, dear Journal for having been so negligent in my attentions. Seven months have elapsed since my last visit to your sanctum, and I cannot even say that I had nothing of importance to communicate to you. On the contrary, one startling occurrence has chased the other, a circumstance which perhaps accounts for my want of attention to your claims, and is, indeed, the only excuse I have to offer. Let me attone by double diligence. Let me first and foremost whisper a grand secret into your ear hitherto unknown only to mamma, George and myself. Can you not guess? Were similar secrets never whispered to you? Of course, they were. I myself read one made by another Mary, eighteen years ago. You understand now? Ah, I thought you would. Well, it happened some three months ago, but how? I can hardly tell. Maybe George has a better memory, so you had better ask him. I will tell you, however, that the occurrence has made me extremely happy, much happier than I thought I would ever be again. Even mamma is more cheerful in consequence, entering with spirit into the date of the marriage and what we are going to do afterwards. From this you must not infer that the day has been fixed—we are altogether too expectant for such a step just now. George has taken upon himself the task of establishing papa's identity with Harry Halleck, and also to procure a duplicate of my parental marriage certificate, but in both of these undertakings he has signally failed. In spite of the most diligent inquiries, George has failed to discover the least trace of Harry Brown after his disappearance from Plutopolis. Papa must have had potent reasons to thus conceal his tracks, although I feel in my soul that they were in no way discreditable to him. I surmise that his relations to his brother must have been highly unpleasant,

causing him to form the resolution of disappearing completely, but I only surmise it. As to the certificate, we have been equally unsuccessful. George's inquiries have brought to light the fact that the natives of Yoko killed Mr. Swift about ten years ago, and burned the little church, with all its contents, destroying in that way the register and all other documents connected with Mr. Swift's official actions. Strange to say, these failures do not effect either mamma or me, at least as far as the prospect of the possession or loss of millions is concerned. To tell the truth, dear mamma has always been something of a socialist, if not communist, and often scrupled at the ownership of so much wealth, at the expense, she says, of our fellow-men. Indeed, if we now recover this wealth, I feel sure that she will use it in conformity with these views, not in charity, which she considers unfair, but in justice and the recognition of the fact that all men are brothers.

I am at a loss to conjecture what we shall do with the view of pushing our claims, and my two confederates are in the same dilemma; but it seems to be silently understood that some modus operandi will be adopted, even if George's investigations remain fruitless. George is decidedly of the opinion that Mr. Halleck will never voluntarily acknowledge our claim of relationship, *i. e.*, to papa's fortune, unless we furnish him proofs which cannot be refuted. I naturally adopt his views, but mamma says she cannot force herself to think so poorly of the brother of a man who ranked so high among his fellow beings for honesty, for fairness and magnanimity. If we fail to secure the proofs in question, she will, at an early date, call upon Mr. James Halleck, disclose to him our relationship with his lamented brother, and then appeal to his integrity and sense of equity. George shakes his head, but does not try to dissuade her, as such a step cannot destroy prospects which, in his opinion, have already assumed a desperate aspect. George himself is certainly the soul of noble disinterestedness. Although the loss of papa's fortune to mamma and myself signifies its prospective loss to him, he urges frequently an abandonment of our claim, on the ground that it causes us needless worry, and must necessarily hurt the feelings of high-strung natures. Mamma, however, is determined; partly from a sense of noble pride, and partly, I guess, with the intention of carrying out some philanthropic scheme, in case the needful means are placed at her disposal. Well, if we recover the lost millions, she will find in me not only a negative well-wisher, but an active assistant, for I, too, have imbibed the

principles laid down in the writings of our great socialists.

Aug. 30th. Our affairs are in the *statu quo* of a month ago, excepting a new and rather annoying feature which has since developed. I say developed, for what I am going to record is not exactly new, dating, in fact, from the appearance of Mr. Josephus Cheatham in our house. I have repeatedly mentioned the bold and significant glances he has had the impudence to cast at me. My coldly ignoring him had no effect on Mr. Cheatham; on the contrary, his attentions became more marked as the weeks passed by, assuming first the shape of attempts to say polite things, scented either with sweetness or imaginary cleverness. I have stated that Mr. Cheatham would insist upon occasional visits in the sitting room. A person less callous would have been deterred from demonstrations by the icy coldness with which they were received; but in Mr. Cheatham's case, nature seems to have made a mistake by supplying him with the thickness, or at least toughness, of an elephant's hide. Mr. Cheatham was not only not discouraged, but actually elated, for his visits grew in length and frequency. He was cunning enough to clothe them always in the garb of business, thus hindering us from forbidding them. If Mr. Cheatham had over-stepped the rules of etiquette, it would have been different; but although his eyes betrayed a constantly increasing admiration for my charms, he was clever enough not to give mamma or myself just cause for requesting a discontinuance of his calls. To the outer world Mr. Cheatham presents the appearance of an exemplary young man. He is handsome, well-dressed, has an income apparently adequate to his wants, and, in the eyes of the world, is quite the fellow by whose attentions a girl ought to consider herself flattered. My own aversion must be intuitive and a lenient observer might shake his head reprovingly at my super-fastidiousness. Perhaps I am too severe; perhaps the consciousness of his loathsome admiration gives an undue sharpness to my feelings; but this much is certain, that I shudder at the mere sight of this man, and that I must call to my aid all my good senses to overcome the presentiment that he is to be the evil genius of my life. But, to come to the point: It was yesterday, during one of Mr. Cheatham's obnoxious visits and during mamma's temporary absence, that he had the audacity to offer me his hand and heart. If I had followed my first impulse, I would have slapped him in the face and then turned him from the room like one of those disgusting reptiles which combine hideousness with poison, but though I curbed this

inclination with a powerful effort, I am certain that my countenance was a true index of the feelings animating me while I politely, but with icy chilliness, declined the honor of such a connection. He scowled visibly, but only momentarily, and then requested me not to decide too hastily and permit him to earn the favor he asked, by continued and boundless devotion. I cut him short by saying: "Not so, Mr. Cheatham; I feel, in fact I know, that I shall never entertain for you such feelings as would make a marriage with you possible. I despise coquetry, and would commit an act of unpardonable levity were I to encourage you to entertain for another moment the possibility of the realization of your wishes." After these words I rose, and he interpreting my action as a dismissal, followed my example, saying more pointedly than before and with a deepening scowl on his face, "Very well, Miss Brown, be it as you wish. I fail to comprehend how and why my well-meant offer should arouse in you the feelings of indignation and aversion so plainly depicted in your countenance. I trust that you will never regret this hasty and supercilious rejection. Rest assured that I, for my part, shall never forget the puerile role you made me in this farce. I wish you good night."

I feel that Josephus Cheatham is my enemy now, my mortal foe, who would delight in any chance to make me wretched and effect my ruin. I shrink from informing either mamma or George of this repulsive scene, for I know that mamma would worry, and perhaps resent the fellow's presumption, while George, on the other hand, might provoke a quarrel and sharpen into a mortal feud a relation sufficiently hostile as it is. It is not very likely that Mr. Cheatham will molest me after this severe rebuke; so let the matter rest, and not conjure up consequences which prudence and discretion may possibly avert.

Sept. 7th. Last night we three confederates held a council of war, and determined upon a definite course of conduct. Perhaps matters would not have come to a crisis so soon, if mamma had not incidentally found one of our old Calcutta friends, who knew all about my parent's marriage, or at least their living together as husband and wife. When mamma told him of our loss and asked him whether he could, and would testify in our behalf, he cheerfully consented, and placed himself entirely at our disposal. It was decided that he should call upon Mr. Halleck, on the plea of business, and on that occasion see the portrait. As Mr. Moulton—this is

his name—had seen papa shortly before his last departure from Calcutta, his testimony concerning the identity between papa and the picture would be of great value, and when he told mamma, after his visit to the bank, that he was ready to swear to his opinion that the subject of the picture and papa were one and the same person, mamma felt greatly elated, and fixed the decisive interview with the banker at ten o'clock to-morrow morning. Both Mr. Moulton and myself are to be witnesses of this interview, and I must confess that I am not a little excited at the prospect.

Sept. 8th. The portentous interview is over. Like Cæsar, we went, saw, but unlike him suffered a defeat. For my part, I expected nothing else. We have no legal proof whatever, to substantiate our claims, and George's delineation of Mr. James Halleck's character had prepared me to consider an appeal to his generosity, wasted breath and labor. Nor must I, in justice to him, forget to state here that an acknowledgment of our claim would have been equal to a renunciation of a fortune of some fifty millions, even fair-minded men would have considered long and carefully, before taking. I do not mean to intimate that I consider Mr. Halleck to be such a man; on the contrary, this morning's experience has convinced me that he is a weak, if not a vicious character, incapable of rising to grand self-negation, a devotee to mammon and its companions, influence and power. On the other hand, this morning's interview brought out more strikingly the many noble traits of mamma's character. She—but why moralize? I'll give a short sketch of the incidents connected with our visit, as such a description will tell more graphically than any reflections of my own, the assertions made above.

We found Mr. Halleck in his private office. He seemed little surprised at our appearance, wondering, no doubt, of what nature might be the business occasioning the call of a trio so oddly compounded. Mamma soon ended his uncertainty, by saying in her straight forward manner: "Mr. Halleck, we have come to inform you of the certain important discoveries we have made: discoveries which establish the most intimate relationship between you and ourselves, and imply rights and privileges we are determined to claim."

The banker looked mystified and continued his reply to a wondering "Madam?" Mamma resumed, pointing to the portrait and betraying by the increased animation of her voice and features, a corresponding deepening of emotions:

"I have no wish to keep you in suspense, sir. The sub-

ject of this portrait was my husband, and is the father of this young lady."

These words startled Mr. Halleck to such a degree, that he rose to his feet, repeating the word, "madam?" giving it an increased emphasis, betraying at once wonderment, incredulity and irony.

"Mr. Harry Halleck was, as I stated before, my husband, and is the father of this young lady, my daughter Mary," mamma continued, regaining her wonted composure ."I trust you will be sincerely glad when you learn all the details establishing the truth of my statement, and receive us with that cordiality which our intimate relationship demands and justifies."

Mr. Halleck became pale as a corpse; then suddenly the blood rushed violently into his face, coloring him to a deep scarlet, while he replied:

"These are strange assertions, Mrs.—Mrs.——?"

"Brown," mamma said quietly, "although I trust that my communications will induce you, to assist us, in establishing our claims to that of Halleck."

Mamma's assurance evidently increased the perplexity of the banker, who said with a hoarse and somewhat shaky voice: "My lamented brother never intimated by word or mien, that he was married. You need, therefore, not wonder at my surprise. And now, madam, you are, no doubt, prepared, to advance the legal proofs of your assertions, being, to all appearances, too sensible a person, to expect me to give credence to such startling, and—I beg your pardon—unlikely assertions, without them." This thrust did not discomfort mamma, unable though she was, to fortify her statements by the proofs demanded. Looking with her honest eyes straight into those of the banker, she replied:

"I think I shall be fully able to satisfy you; but permit me, to give a short account of myself as well as these proofs you demand, as they are inseparably connected." She looked at him inquiringly, and when he bowed and said nervously, "Proceed," she began to give a clear and concise statement of her marriage, my birth and education, and the principal features of the eighteen years following. When she spoke of the witnesses of the marriage ceremony and the certificate she had secured, Mr. Halleck's face paled once more; but when she related the death of the missionary, the destruction of the church and its records, and the loss of the valuable document by the burning of the Albatross, the banker's face

resumed much of its former assurance, and when at last mamma had ended, he said coldly and with considerable sarcasm in his tone:

"A very pretty tale, Mrs. Brown, and well told, I must confess; but, in the want of definite legal proofs you must excuse me from giving it implicit credence, at least as far as the identity of your husband and my brother Harry is concerned. As I told you before, he never breathed to me the existence of a wife and daughter, and, under the circumstances, I must politely, but firmly decline, to acknowledge claims lacking all substantial confirmation."

"Well, as far as testimony is concerned, here is Mr. Moulton, late from Calcutta, where he formerly knew my husband intimately. He will tell you, that he is ready to affirm by an oath his belief in the identity of my husband and the original of this portrait."

Mr. Halleck, who had paled a moment under these words, now once more regained his composure and said with that supercilious irony so hard to bear:

"His belief: No doubt, Mrs. Brown; but you forget that our courts will require more than a mere belief, to grant petitions of such vital importance. As I said before: As long as you fail to produce unquestionable evidence for the establishment of your marriage, and, above all, fail to prove the identity of your husband with my lamented brother, I must decline a relationship which though certainly enticing, involves considerations of too much magnitude and importance to be decided by romance and sentiments of gallantry."

With these words he rose, intimating in that way his desire of ending our interview. We also rose, of course, but before leaving, mamma advanced a step towards the banker, and said with an emphasis under which he evidently winced:

"Very well, Mr. Halleck, I can and will wait; but remember, that I shall make it the business of my life, to convince the courts of the truthfulness of statements which you deny and would probably continue to deny, however fully and deeply convinced. Rest assured that we shall not annoy you personally, even after the full establishment of our claims to your brother's name and fortune, for the long and intimate relations with your brother have taught us to spurn a relationship so sarcastically discussed and so eagerly disclaimed. I wish you good day, Mr. Halleck."

She left the room so proudly that one might easily have imagined her the victor instead of the vanquished party. Nor

has this defeat affected her spirits or peace of mind. When George met us in the evening for consultation, she entered with much animation into the discussion of measures feasible and advisable.

George is not at all sanguine as to the issue of a combat in the courts with Mr. Halleck, unless we discover more positive proofs of our assertions than those at our disposal at present. When mamma stated her determination to search for such proofs, he said:

"You are right, mamma, and I shall aid you with all my heart. I think we ought to advertise in a guarded manner for the seamen who witnessed a marriage ceremony in the missionary church of Yoko, on the 25th of July, 18—. It is not very probable, that such an advertisement will reach these ignorant tars, even assuming the doubtful fact of their existence this day. We might also write to some of your old acquaintances in Europe, to ascertain whether they or anyone of them know perchance something of Mr. Brown's antecedents. Without further evidence, mamma, I cannot in conscience counsel you, to begin a combat, which would rapidly consume your little fortune, and end in another defeat"

Mamma is too sensible, not to see the force of these arguments. So, she yielded with a good grace, conferring upon George the power of general-in-chief, promising due and implicit obedience to his injunctions regarding this case. After this concession he resumed:

"And now, ladies and confederates," he continued, "let me inform you that your interview with Mr. Halleck has made my longer stay there highly problematical, and—"

"Oh, George;" mamma interrupted him; "I never thought of that. I am truly sorry that--"

"Mamma there is no occasion for any sorrow whatever. First, my apprehension may be groundless and Mr. Halleck may not know, or decline to resent my participation in this conspiracy; or, if he does; if he interrogates me concerning my relation to you, I shall tell him the truth, and take the consequences, that is my dismissal from his service. Such an occurrence, however, would only quicken my separation from the bank, as I have long since formed the resolution of leaving it, partly on account of the hurtful influence of money upon even those merely handling it, but chiefly on account of the relation between Cheatham and myself, which would make a continued intercourse with him unbearable. And now, my friends, let me sketch out to you my intentions. I have saved a few

thousands, which I propose to invest in a little manufacturing venture. My father used to carry on a tannery, and being familiar with all the details of his business, I deem myself capable of carrying it on successfully, and support therewith a helpmate and companion, Say, Mary, "Will you be a good girl and say 'yes,' when I ask you to marry me on the first day which sees my tannery in operation?"

What could I say? Mamma favored the idea with such earnestness that I gave up all resistances as useless, and laying my hand in George's, said "yes." Still he does not, of necessity, fix the date of the tying of the knot upon to-morrow or next week, as George will await further developments in the bank, and may not start his tannery for an entire year.

May 1st. The Winter is o'er; Spring has set in, in all its beauty, but things are pretty much as they were in the Fall. Mr. Halleck did not see proper to inquire into George's relation to the ladies which, at that time, threatened to become such potent factors in his life, and as the unsatisfactory condition of the money market made the establishment of any new industry risky, George resolved to benefit by this respite, and increase his means for starting and conducting properly his pet scheme, the tannery. Yesterday, however, he informed us, that Cheatham's hostility had become so marked of late as to make an open rupture with him not only imminent, but unavoidable.

He says, he was not afraid of him, but considers a prudent retreat preferable to an ignominious fight and has therefore fixed the 1st of Oct. next as the date for the opening of his shop. He added laughingly, that he gives this early notice so as to cut off all excuses for not getting ready in season, a method so popular amongst the fair sex.

So, the day has at last been set, at least, in as far as it is coincident with that on which the first hides are doomed to lose their hair in the tannery. I shall then be a little over eighteen, rather young, I think, for assuming the management of my own household; but George tells me laughingly, that he don't mind this much, as it is a misfortune likely to be less glaring twenty years hence.

Sept. the 15th. Two more weeks and the chapter of maidenhood will be closed, and that of womanhood, *i. e.*, married life begun. Mamma at first refused to live with us, saying that she had no desire of earning the terrible reputation of the mother in-law "par excellence;" but both George and myself coaxed so hard that she finally consented to live with us.

George has found a tannery in the suburbs of Plutopolis, which is provided with all modern improvements, and can be rented at a low figure on account of the recent and sudden death of the owner. There is a neat cottage in close proximity, and after a close inspection of the same by both mamma and myself, it has been rented, furnished and prepared for immediate occupation, both George and myself feeling disinclined to the exposure and ridicule of a bridal trip. Mamma has letted this entire house, and insists upon bearing half the household expenses, an arrangement quite propitious, as George's means are rather limited, and mamma's genorosity will enable him, to draw but lightly upon his moderate earnings. Only two more weeks. Dear me, I feel as if that were a long time, and as if a good many things of importance might happen during them.

Sept. 25th. Were the above words prophetic? I am almost inclined to reply affirmatively, for yesterday an occurrence as startling as unpleasant took place in our house. The latter feature will be readily understood, when I say, that Mr. Cheatham had something to do with it. Since my rejection of his offer he has left me in peace, without, however, making any strenuous efforts to avoid me. Imagine therefore, my surprise, when, last night, a knock was heard at the door of the sitting room, and Mr. Cheatham entered in obedience to our summons. He addressed himself to mamma, who begged him to be seated, and asked him what she could do for him. Thinking that he wanted to pay his rent, I rose and left the room, not so much with the view of avoiding him, as to execute a a little commission given me by mamma. It took me only to the next room, the door of which was a few inches ajar, thus allowing any loud conversation to reach my ears. At first I heard nothing, but after a minute or two mamma's voice rose in pitch and volume, and I heard her say:

"Mr. Cheatham, how can you dare to make to me, or rather my daughter, so degrading a proposal? Cease at once, and—"

"But, Mrs. Brown, be reasonable," he interrupted pleadingly. "Remember, I can make you rich as Croesus, and shall sacrifice my own interests, if you will only intercede for me with Miss Mary."

At this moment I heard mamma's voice crying in tones of excitement, quite unusual with her: "Mary!" I hastened to obey the summons, and on entering, saw mamma standing before Mr. Cheatham in an attitude of menace, her lips

curling with disdain, and her fine eyes flashing fire. When I reached her side she said hurriedly:

"Mary, this gentleman informs me that he has discovered papers insuring to you and me the possession of millions. He is ready and willing to deliver these papers into my hands for a very slight consideration. As this consideration involves your future, I thought it best to refer Mr. Cheatham to you. Well, sir, here is my daughter. Repeat to her the proposition, if you dare."

The fellow quailed a little under her withering glances, but his inborn brazenness sustained him and he said half insinuatingly, half menacingly:

"Miss Mary, you are a young lady of uncommon intelligence, and it is with an appeal to your good sense that I now repeat to you what I told Mrs. Brown a few minutes ago. I have discovered papers which establish beyond cavil, your claim to an immense fortune. You are aware that I entertain for you feelings of the deepest and sincerest devotion. Can you blame me, if I now use my discovery, to push my cause? Everything is fair in war, you know, and you must ascribe it to my great affection for you, if I couple my offer to surrender these papers, with the request to establish at the same time my own happiness, by a grant of your heart and hand?"

A momentary silence ensued. I had become the prey of conflicting emotions. Wrath at his boldness of thus deeming me capable to yield to mercenary considerations in the most solemn transaction of life, battled with the dictates of prudence and discretion. Unfortunately I have inherited mamma's indignation at anything low and contemptible, and this inheritance now led me to follow the impulse of wounded pride and dignity. I walked in silence to the door, and opening it with an energetic jerk, said as calmly as my flying pulses would permit: "Depart, and never dare to show yourself in this room again!"

The fellow did not reply. I think he was too enraged to give vent to his fury in words, but his eyes flashed fire and I verily believe, if his looks had possessed the power of "*She*," he would have killed both mamma and myself on the spot. He stood there in silence for a few seconds; then he hissed between his teeth: "You shall suffer for this," and then, without a word of adieu, rushed from the room. No sooner had he disappeared when a strong reaction set in, causing me to sink into a chair and to burst into a flood of tears. Mamma tried to soothe me, saying: "He is not worthy of such a man-

ifestation of regret," to which I replied: "I do not pity him, mamma; it is anger, not compassion, which makes me cry. I am calmer now, and fear my outbursts was more just than prudent. Mamma, that man has become our deadly foe, and woe to us, if his chance and means for hurting us is ever equal to his desire."

Mamma tried to comfort me, by assuring me that Mr. Cheatham's rage was as important as intense, and that he would in all probability free us from his irksome presence. In this, however, she was mistaken, as he still inhabits his room, and shows by no sign or movement that he intends to leave it. Mamma, on her part, would give him notice to leave, were it not for our early withdrawal from the premises, and her unwillingness of robbing our renter of a lodger who pays well and punctually, let his character be what it may.

CHAPTER III.

THE POWER OF GOLD—THREE YEARS LATER.

Oct. 1st, 18—. The third anniversary of our wedding day: What a flood of thoughts this circumstance conjures up in my soul. They are of a mixed nature, although joy, peace and contentment with my fate, form an overwhelming majority, leaving only a few discordant elements in the throng. George is well, and, if possible, more devoted to me to-day, than on our wedding day. Elinor and Richard are developing into handsome and charming children, although I sometimes notice in the former marks of selfishness which remind me of her uncle, the banker. Nor does her intellect seem as bright as her brother's, discoveries which only increase my love for the child and sharpen the sense of my responsibility. Fortunately, George and I are a unit on the point of education, both of us believing that children have rights as well as adults, and that the attempt of enforcing obedience without explanation or the mere convenience of the parents, tends to the formation of the many wharped characters the world exhibits. Of the unpleasant thoughts, I will only mention mamma's failing health, and the unsatisfactory condition of George's business. As to mamma's health, I cannot close my eyes to the fact that her days are numbered. We have consulted the best physicians of the city as to her ailments, and all of them agree that her heart has a defect, which is rapidly

developing and will cause her death, as soon as its normal action is impaired. Mamma knows this, but is cheerful and contented and displays fortitude which sustains and comforts George and myself; and enables us to submit with resignation to the inevitable.

As to George's business, an adverse fate seems to have attached itself to his heels, foiling his designs, upsetting his most rational calculations, and turning into losses the profits his energy, industry and good judgment have a right to expect. There seems to be some subtle influence in the air, watching and destroying his plans in the germ. When he goes out to buy hides, a rival has either forestalled him, or offered such prices, that George cannot purchase, without the definite certainty of a loss. When he has secured good workmen, and expects smooth sailing, somebody offers higher wages, and poor George is compelled to let the men go, as he cannot afford to pay more than he does. Even the chemicals he uses, seem to rise in price, as soon as he needs them, and all these things have clouded a brow generally so bright and smooth. To complete his bad luck, the market is always low, when he wants to sell; nor does waiting mend the matter, for the longer he waits, the lower the price gets. What can it all mean? Is there any such thing as bad luck or, worse, an evil genius spoiling our best efforts, and defeating our plans? I trust not, for such a thought is discouraging, souring one's temper and leading to indolence and dissipation. I do not know why, at this moment the face of Josephus Cheatham rises before my mental eye. Wouldn't he be an evil genius with a vengeance? But I suppose he has by this time, forgotten me and the threat he made on leaving. He has a family now, and wealth and station, in short, everything calculated to make a man like him happy. Happy? Hardly, I think, a man of his caliber cannot be truly happy. Contented is perhaps a more correct expression, although real contentment can, in my estimation, be felt only by a pure and tranquil mind, qualities foreign to Mr. Cheatham, unless I greatly miscomprehend his character. Why do I think and write of him in this manner, I wonder? I truly cannot tell, for I had not thought of him, since I ordered him from the room. Even his success in the world left me indifferent, although both mamma and myself guessed, and probably correctly, that he sold the papers he alluded to, to the banker for his daughter's hand, and a partnership in the bank. They must have been worth their weight in gold, else so proud a man as Mr. Hal-

leck would not thus have humored and honored a mere upstart. I feel certain that these documents contained the proofs we have hunted so long, so diligently, and so vainly. I also feel certain, that their possession would have turned into our coffers the gold in the vaults of the bank; but if you ask me, whether I regret the rejection of Mr. Cheatham's offer, I reply: "*No, a thousand times no.*" A crust of bread is, if shared by dear George, a thousand times better than the most sumptuous fare with a rogue like Cheatham. I feel that I do him no wrong by branding him in this manner, for a man who can make the surrender of documents not his own, contingent upon conditions, is certainly a rogue. No, I do not regret the loss of papa's millions under the circumstances, though I wish I had enough of the money to clear the brow of poor George. He has sunk money every year, until his little fortune is totally swamped. Indeed, I do not see how he could have continued in business, if mamma had not come to his rescue. At first he refused her aid, and then you should have seen mamma. She was truly grand in her displeasure, lecturing him so effectually on the folly and wickedness of false pride, that he gave up and pleaded for mercy. Mentioning Cheatham's name makes me think of meeting his family in the park the other day. Mamma, the children and I drove through the park last Sunday, when we passed a flashy equipage, in whose inmates mamma recognized Mrs. Cheatham. There were two little ones with her, a boy and a girl, probably her children. I would have paid no attention to them, if mamma had not excited my curiosity by mentioning the lady's name. The horses were prancing impatiently, but their gait was slow, and as the carriage was coming towards us and open, I had a long and searching look at the envied mistress of so much wealth and elegance. Envied. How superficial is the judgment of the world. This woman is not enviable, for she certainly is not happy. Her features, naturally beautiful, are frozen into cold indifference and apathy. If it were not for this; if this icy mask did not effectually cover her soul, I would expect to see despair hold undisputed sway there. Only once when her little daughter spoke to her, her features relaxed for a moment, a gentler feeling enlivening them, as a warm shower animates even the desert. But, like this desert, her mien absorbed this shower in a second, and nothing but the icy rigor remained. I could not help shuddering at this sight, and felt relieved, when the sad spectacle of wretched grandeur was lost from view. But here is George coming

home from work, and supper is not half ready, so fare thee well, my Journal.

* * * * TWO YEARS LATER. * * * *

Oct. 1st. "How rapidly time flies. We have been married five years. Elinor is four, Richard three years, and mamma, dear, good, noble mamma, has been sleeping in the grave for nearly ten months. How I miss her. How I long for her advice, her cheerful, encouraging words. And yet I feel that it is best so, for the last year of her life was one endless suffering, which would have intensified with every new day. So George and I were compelled to school ourselves into sad resignation, and meet with a sigh of relief the cruel day which deprived us of our best friend. It seems to me that the dark cloud, which from the first overshadowed George's business ventures, has visibly blackened since mamma's death. The years before her death were disastrous enough, but the one ending to-day shows a startling increase of the constant and unceasing persecutions which poor George is destined to endure, and which is surely calculated to bewilder the mind and upset the judgment of the most unsophisticated. I wonder it has not soured his disposition or driven him to apathy and indifference, and it is the highest eulogy I can pronounce upon his mental vigor, when I say that in spite of these chronic persecutions of an evil fate, George is to-day the same patient worker, the same painstaking planner as on the day when he first opened his tannery. When I condole with him he says encouragingly: "Never mind, little woman; it is a long lane which has no turn. One of these days the imp that makes me his target will tire of his work and leave us. Then we shall make up for lost time, indeed we shall."

If it had not been for mamma's little fortune, George would have been obliged to give up his tannery long ago. As it is, his business has already swallowed two of the four houses forming her estate, and I am much afraid that another year will take another house, leaving us only the large one in which we lived when I made George's acquaintance. I think at times it would be better to give up the tannery and depend upon the rent of our houses, but when I broach this subject George shakes his head energetically and says: "Little woman, do you think I could sit still, live on your bounty and grow fat with indolence? No, Mary dear; ask anything but that; unless you want to lay me into an early grave, do not

ask me to abandon myself to the existence of a parasite."

Well, that settles it, of course, but I shall be very glad when he abandons this tannery, which has been a sink-hole from the first, and will swallow up all we possess, if we do not abandon it in time.

FIVE YEARS LATER.

Oct. 1st. Trickle, trickle, trickle. One drop of the stream of time falls after another, slowly but surely working a hole into the rock of ages. Soon our little band, and with it the millions of human beings now living, will be swept away by the current which never returneth. In the recognition of this awful—I might have said *solemn* fact, what does individual weal or woe signify? Is it not rather rediculous for the ephemeral fly to complain about its troubles, or to call attention to its contentment and the sources from which they are derived? Yet, such is man, and I may certainly be pardoned if I indulge in recording here the doings, the trials and the pleasures and recreations of the individuals constituting this family. I write it with a sigh of relief that yesterday witnessed the close of an industry which slowly but surely sapped the resources at our command. In other words, George sold the fixtures of the tannery to which he has so faithfully and persistently adhered, trusting that every new day would break the tide of ill-luck which has so stubbornly and strangely dogged his steps. A stranger, *i. e.*, a person not acquainted with dear George, might seek the cause of this ill fortune in him and his poor management; but against such an insinuation I most solemnly protest. True, I love him with all my heart, but I am not foolishly blind, and assert again and again that there is not a better calculator, a more pains-taking business man, or a more zealous worker in the land than George Woods. If you ask me how, then I explain this strange phenomenon, I bow my head in humility, and say: "I do not know." It goes against reason and logic to imagine that some persons are born under an unlucky star, but with such ample and long continued experience as I have had during my married life, I am very near getting superstitious. It is a pity George did not sell years ago, for then we might, and probably would have saved the large house in which we became acquainted with each other. As it is, we had to sell it to satisfy several creditors of long standing, that had become impatient and would not be put off any longer. George realized $2,000 from the sale of the tannery, with which he is determined to

buy this cottage, as he intends seeking employment as a book-keeper in some firm. He said: "I wish I had listened to your counsel years ago, then I would not have squandered your fortune."

"You did *not* squander my fortune," I interrupted almost rudely. "I shall allow nobody, not even yourself, to thus wrong you."

"Well, wasted, then," he resumed with a good-natured smile; "or lost, if that term is yet too severe. At all events, if I had obeyed you, we would now possess the means of giving our children that education to which they are entitled."

"We can do that as we are," I persisted. "I can, and do teach them music and the languages, and when the time comes for them to frequent some college, we can send them to one of those numerous and sterling institutions endowed by noble philanthropists, dispensing knowledge for a trifle or gratis."

George did not reply, thus acknowledging in silence that I was right. This brings more vividly to my mind the fact that our children are eight and nine years respectively. I abstain, generally, from reflecting on their character; probably from fear of showing some preference or partiality, a weakness so despicable in my eyes. Yet I may in justice say, that while Elinor is rapidly developing into a very handsome child, Richard is surely endowed with higher spiritual gifts Elinor is rather slow in comprehension, a deficiency for which neither George nor I blame her. Nor do we reproach her for her vanity and selfishness, traits of character which she did not acquire voluntarily and for which she is more to be pitied than blamed. Both of us recognize the fact that her education is a task of great difficulty and responsibility, requiring all the patience, sagacity and circumspection at our command.

Nov. 2nd. George has been so fortunate as to secure a situation in a dry goods firm, yielding a salary by no means brilliant, but sufficient for our modest wants. I trust a new era has thus set in for us.

Dec. 1st. This afternoon George came home unexpectedly, to inform me that the firm for which he works has changed hands, and that the new owners have no use for his services, bringing a competent and highly valued book-keeper with them. I heard the news with a sinking heart, but a cheerful countenance, begging him not to mind and to look for another place. He says that such is his intention, but I

notice that this new streak of bad luck greatly oppresses him. He has set out to begin his researches at once.

Jan. 2nd. To day George enters upon the duties of his new position. He speaks enthusiastically of the kindness of his employer, an insurance agent, saying that his duties are as pleasant as his salary satisfactory. I trust no evil fate will this time mar his satisfaction.

April 1st. Well, this time George's engagement promises to hold out. I know that his employer is more than ordinarily pleased with his efforts, and that he will be retained as long as the business is continued. Why, there he is now, much earlier than usual. I wonder what it can mean?

April 2nd. I knew from George's haggard face that something had gone wrong. I rose when he entered, and my anxious look must have betrayed my thoughts against my will, for he smiled sadly, saying: "You are right, good little woman, I have lost my place."

"But how is that?" I inquired almost indignantly. "How could Mr. Paige—"

"Mr. Paige is all right," he said soothingly, closing my lips with a kiss. "Indeed, he is not to be blamed at all. He received such a splendid offer for the good will of his business that any one would have jumped at it, you and me included."

So he is going to quit?" I inquired. "Well, can he not put in a good word for you with his successor?"

"He can, and what is more, he did, but it is the old story. The old clerks will be retained, and so there is no room for me."

* * * NINE YEARS LATER. * * * *

Oct. 1st, 18—. Yesterday Mrs. Laura Kean, George's sister, arrived from Patropolis to take up her abode in Plutopolis. We both invited her to live with us, but this offer she politely but firmly rejected. "You are very kind children," she said energetically. "In fact, I sincerely believe, you are really too kind for your own good, and allow the world to impose upon you. I like you both immensely and shall be with you every day, but that does not entitle me to come between you, and mar and disturb the tranquility of your married life. I have learned that the little cottage across the street is for rent; so I shall take it and be sufficiently near you for all practical purposes. You know I draw a little pension on account of Kean's services in the late war, and with the interest from the few dollars I have saved I cannot only manage very

well, but can even slip a penny into Mary's hands when Dick's shoes need soling. There now, say nothing more about it. I see the drayman with the furniture I have purchased; so I must go over and direct the unloading, and if you will go with me Mary and let me benefit by your counsel and good taste in placing the furniture, I shall take it very kindly.

Oct. 15th. Sister Laura is snugly domiciled in her cottage, and a true blessing she has proved for me. She is keen as a razor and energetic in no ordinary degree, but she is also kindness personified and listens with a touching patience to everything I have to tell her. The children, of course, from an endless source of gossip on my part, and I could hug and kiss her a hundred times a day for the patience with which she lets me sing their praises. Richard is seventeen now and a smarter and better boy never delighted a mother's heart. He has been in college now for two years, and ranks high in all his studies, particularly in chemistry and natural science. He knows more about electricity than many a practical operator and has constructed several apparatuses which have created the attention of his teachers. He can now telegraph like the best of them and says that he will some day make some great invention and through it secure millions for us. His aunt has taken a great liking to him, at which I do not at all wonder, for who could become acquainted with him and not like him? As to Elinor, she does not excel in her studies, plays and sings fairly well, and has developed into one of the most beautiful girls I ever saw. I do not say this in pride, but rather in sadness, for I cannot conceal from my troubled mind the truth that to a girl of her disposition, so much personal beauty is a source of great peril. She constantly attracts attention, a circumstance which naturally feeds a vanity already inordinate, and fills her head with notions destroying all chances for serious study. When I broached these fears to Laura, she looked serious saying earnestly: "Well, Mary, there is danger in so much beauty, and no mistake. In my estimation an early marriage to some good and sensible man would be the best thing for the girl I can think of." I have also given to Laura a detailed account of the many strange misfortunes connected with George's career, both as a tanner and an employee in the establishments of others. I told her how he could never keep a place more than a few months and had little or nothing to do the last five years. In fact his constant changes have earned him the totally undeserved reputation of unsteadiness and fickle-

ness, preventing some parties from employing him at all and reducing his chances for work to sudden emergencies and unexpected combinations. Very often when he seemed to have established himself in some man's good graces, with the prospects of a permanent job, somebody stepped in and bought the person out, destroying in that manner George's chances of being retained by the new firm. Laura seemed deeply interested in this strange experience of a brother, whose good and sterling qualities she knows as well as myself. She has returned to this subject more than once, asking numerous questions and pondering upon my answer with a profoundness showing plainly that the story has made a deep, if not painful impression upon her. However, some things have occurred recently which put this circumstance into the background. A schoolmate of Richard's, whose father commands a steamer plying between Plutopolis and Sanitopolis, making regular trips around Cape Cornu, has invited Richard to accompany him on one of these voyages which generally consume six months. The lad is almost beside himself with the idea of the bare possibility of making such a wonderful tour, and both his father and I are only too well inclined to humor him as he has proved himself a most exemplary student and son.

However, George thought it best first to consult his teachers, fearing that the voyage would seriously interrupt his studies and thus materially mar his prospects. Prof. Painter, however, encourages the idea. He says that Richard has cultivated his mind at the expense of his body, and that this voyage will no doubt exercise a most beneficial influence over both. The Professor says that a lad of Richard's studious disposition could not make such a voyage without picking up bits of information calculated to enlarge his views and extend his knowledge. So George tells me he thinks we ought to let the boy go. Of course there are the perils of the ocean; but in facing them he escapes meanwhile the perils of the land, and I therefore only smiled when George told him he could go. Richard is almost frantic with joy, *i. e.*, as far as a person of his disposition and strength of mind can become frantic; for I say it with pride and unspeakable satisfaction, that Richard is a lad who can be trusted in each and every situation of life. As the Captain leaves the day after to-morrow Richard has not much time to get ready and so I will have to cease writing until he is gone.

Oct. 18th. Dick has gone. I need not tell here what that means, for every mother who has a boy equally worthy of

love, can imagine my feelings. George is quite pensive, but his sorrow is by a plan which he conceived and which he has submitted to my judgment before acting upon it. It is this: There are a number of bag factories on the banks of the Crab River, some twenty miles north of here, which consume a good deal of hem in the spring. George says he has ascertained that all these mills buy what they need in driblets, here and there, and that a person acquainted with their needs, and the source of their supplies, could undoubtedly secure their trade, buy the hemp in Cyclonia, where it is grown, and make a remunerative speculation out of it. I heard him quietly to the end, then said: "George, it looks safe enough, but you know your ill-luck in anything of the nature of a speculation, and must therefore refuse to shoulder the respon sibility of the venture. I will tell you, however, what you might do: "Your sister Laura is a person of much sagacity; ask her opinion, and if she approves of the speculation, you might engage in it."

"That is a good idea," he replied: "Here she comes, like the wolf in the fable. Sister Laura, come here and give us your opinion concerning a little venture I am contemplating."

"Well, let us hear it," she replied, quietly taking a chair near me. George explained, looking at her expectantly when he had finished. Laura, however, went into a brown study, looking into the air in an absent manner and preserving a deep silence for fully five minutes.

"Well?" George at last inquired to solicit a reply. She answered, by asking a question in turn, a question moreover so far from the point, apparently, and so unexpected withal, that it startled both of us. What she asked was this: "Children, have you an enemy? A person wishing you ill and interested in your ruin?"

"An enemy?" George inquired, evidently bewildered. "An enemy? Not to my knowledge, Laura. What makes you ask?"

I, for my part, said nothing, but through my mind it went like a flash, and before my mental vision was printed in glaring letters, "*Cheatham!*" The process now going on in my mind can't hardly be termed reasoning, making logical deductions or drawing conclusions. The entire thing was more like a revelation. All the little annoyances; the specks of ill-luck; the shrinkages in values, then deemed incidental; the transfers of agencies and firms. All these things arranged

themselves into line, forming one continued chain, reaching from poor doomed George to that fatal name in lurid light, "*Cheatham*." How could I have been so blind? How could we both have been so blind? Ah, I know the reason. One naturally imagines a human soul to live in a human body, and now it turns out that that man's body is tenanted by a fiend, by a demon incarnate, by—I cannot find a word covering fully the devilish wickedness of that—that—I do not want to wrong Beelsebub by calling him devil. Alas! the dark age is on the wane, when poor misguided mortals believed in His Majesty with the cloven hoof; but do we really gain much, if we are compelled to take this imaginary devil from his hell and locate him in a human breast; nay, many human breasts?

But to return to poor bewildered George, bewildered because his innate goodness incapatiates him for the conception of so much deviltry. Before Laura could explain, I burst out crying with a mixture of anguish and bitterness: "Oh, George, she is right. I see it all. It is *Cheatham* who has been your unlucky star. It is *Cheatham* who has dogged you step by step, and used his money, power and influence to effect his revenge." Poor George! He was slow, very slow, to believe in such utter depravity of human nature, but as he sat there, letting the past glide in view before him in the new light of Laura's suggestive question, doubt and uncertainty finally changed into conviction. He covered his face with his hands, groaned aloud, and then said bitterly: "You are right Mary. I see it all now. How dreadful, Oh, how dreadful."

What could I say to comfort him? Was it not through me that this blood-hound had been put upon his track? Was it not for my love for him, his love for me, that this human demon had marked him for his prey, following him untiringly by day and night, day after day, month after month, year after year? Poor George! Dearly indeed have you paid for your victory over so hellish a rival.

Oct. 20th. George is sick, very sick. The doctor says a violent mental shock has unstrung his nerves and thrown him into a brain fever and it will require very careful nursing to make him well. He is delirious and incessantly begs some imaginary enemy to spare his wife and children. Even his ravings betrayed his love for us. He never talks and thinks of himself, but it is always his dear ones he wishes to be spared. Laura is a real comfort to me now. Indeed I do not know what I would do without her. I do not know whether I am glad or sorry for Dick's absence. He would be such a

comfort, but he would also be such a sufferer, I think it is well he is away.

Nov. 15th. George is dead! I can write this and write it calmly. I think my heart is petrifying, else how could I write this, and not wring my hands in despair? Yes, my heart is petrifying, or else sinking under the malady to which mamma, poor mamma, fell a victim. Indeed, I have a presentiment that it is so, and that my days are numbered. At all events I will make my last will and testament, and enjoin upon poor Dick such wishes as I desire to see executed. Dick, my beloved son, thou art not an ordinary boy and will understand thy mother, when she leaves to thee her last and sole legacy, her injunction, to revenge thy parents upon the fiend that destroyed them.

Here the diary ended. Richard Woods sat fully fifteen minutes lost in thoughts, yielding to emotions of sorrow. How keenly did he feel the loss of such a mother. He now began to understand many things which had been dark and mysterious to him before. Then his thoughts involuntarily turned to the monster in human form, who had slain both his parents, for he felt convinced that they would have lived through many more and happy years, if his relentless persecution had not killed them in the prime of life. He remembered having seen this Cheatham on several occasions, for he stood prominent in the ranks of his countrymen, filling the position of Senator in the National Congress, and exercising a powerful influence in Legislative, as well as financial circles. As he thought of this man, honored and envied by thousands; as he thought of the fiendish ingenuity with which he had ruined the material welfare of his parents, and destroyed their lives, a great wrath overcame him. He gritted his teeth and clenched his hands, and if the subject of this intense hatred had at that moment made his appearance, Richard would, in all probability, have pounced upon him and torn him to pieces, limb by limb. We are all more or less creatures of circumstances, and he who has had time to reflect and weigh the consequences, need not look so proudly and superciliously upon him who was rushed into immediate and inconsiderate action. Richard did not yield to this frenzy very long. Seizing once

more the reins over his passions which had slipped momentarily from his hands, he looked again and said tenderly: "Again I vow, sainted mother, that I will faithfully and diligently carry out the injunctions laid down in these lines. They cannot help being corrrct, for a soul which inspired the sentiments of this diary will not, cannot demand of her son anything wrong."

CHAPTER IV.

A STRANGE LEGACY.

Richard broke the seal and read as follows:

My Dear Son:—When you open this letter you have become more intimately acquainted with your parent's lives and the motives influencing their action. You have learned the cause of those failures which so frequently and strangely marred your father's career, and finally produced his untimely end, thus leading indirectly to mine, for without your father, dear boy, I am merely the sunflower without the sun toward which it turns. Like this sunflower, I drooped and withered when the sun ceased to shed upon me his genial light. I would have liked to live for your sake, dear children, but am neither afraid to meet death nor sorry at his appearance. Now, then, I command you: Avenge your father's death and mine; I do not mean that you shall imbue your hands in this monster's blood, but be in an instantaneous and endless war upon that social system which made him what he is. Perhaps he is not so much to blame as we think; perhaps he was unable to resist the powerful influences of his surroundings; the terrible temptation of lust, wealth and power. It is not he, therefore, against whom I beg you to direct your attack, but the baneful social laws which made him what he is. I am well aware, Richard, that, by making this request, I do not charge you with a child's play, nor do I thus secure for you that which, in the world's opinion, constitutes happiness. On the contrary, I know full well that, by thus urging you to war against the pet sins of society, I draw upon you the hatred of this world, its enmity and persecution, agencies well calculated to cause the most courageous to quail. It is more than likely that obedience to my wishes will lead to a protracted martyrdom, Richard, but remember that there is a grand and exalted hap-

piness even in such martyrdom, exceeding by far the shallow pleasures of the world. Nor would I have enjoined this mission upon you, if I did not feel that you are capable of executing it. Remember, that if you feel gratified by this praise, it also implies an obligation on your part; an obligation to use these gifts in a worthy manner, and for useful purposes. And now you would probably inquire: "Mother, dear, what would you wish me to do, and how would you advise me to execute the work in store?" My dear son, I hardly know whether I am able to set up a standard such as you desire, but I shall try to draw a few general outlines for the stupendous work in store for you.

The unequal and unjust distribution of the goods of this world lies undoubtedly at the bottom of all the misery of our race, and this unfair distribution is in turn based upon the ignorance and superstition of the masses. I need hardly tell you that it would be a task both useless and thankless to appeal to the rich for a surrender of their wealth. It was greed, avarice and unfairness, in the first place which put them in possession of their riches, and these very vices would prevent them from listening to, and obeying your exhortations. It is the removal of the ignorance and superstition, therefore, to which you will have to turn your attention. You knew my sentiments as to religion and that I advocate the most unlimited liberty of conscience; but there are doctrines my son, which sap the very foundation of liberty and equal rights. As long as a creed confines itself to the so called spiritual welfare of its devotees, leave it alone. But when its expounders persuade the people to abandon the solid rights and privileges of this life for the uncertain blessings of the shadowy hereafter; when they exhort their dupes to tolerate the usurpations of their oppressors; when they tell them that their celestial happiness will be in proportion to the spoliations they have patiently endured in this life: Raise your voice in vigorous and earnest protestations against such doctrines and denounce preachers who side with the rich and use their influence over their deluded followers, to tolerate usurpations as shocking as they are extensive. Such preachers my boy are in my opinion little better than the pirates themselves.

To enlighten the masses you should go among them, be one of them, and use language adapted to their comprehension. Do not promise them too much for the people, the common people, are shrewd, and much inclined to be distrustful. What is more, my dear boy, do not aim at too high a goal yourself.

To place your haven on a rock towering to the clouds is well enough in theory; but, if the top is inaccessible, what good will it do?

Your enthusiasts will tell you to trust to evolution; but evolution as I take it, implies our own efforts. Every fair-minded person will admit that we are now living in a social mire threatening to swamp the entire race. Then if you cannot reach your rock in the sky, be satisfied to drain your morass, thus lifting mankind upon a sounder and better platform, a basis from which grander and nobler purposes are reachable.

In conclusion I will say, that in order to be successful in such a work as I have staked out for you, you must prepare for it in the profoundest manner. You must not only fill your mind with the soundest knowledge, but exercise your body in the severest manner. You should excel in every manly sport, become a perfect horseman, an expert swimmer, a skillful marksman and an adroit fencer. You should become an athlete, a wrestler and a boxer; in short, you should be capable of defending yourself in all manners of assault; for oh, my dear doy, it would be useless to conceal from you the fact that such assaults will be made on you most viciously and determinedly, not only by your foes, but also by the very ones for whom you labor. I do not say this to discourage you Richard, but to impress deeply upon your mind the necessity of a thorough preparation. If you can secure wealth to aid you, do so. Let me caution you here, my boy, not to underrate the power of gold in the work mapped out for you. If gold enables the oppressors of our race to keep the masses in slavery and subordination it stands to reason that it must also be a powerful agent in effecting its liberation. Try then to obtain a weapon which will enable you to fight the foe in his own peculiar fashion, but while you accumulate gold, and much gold, be sure to keep the masses ignorant of the fact, for the average fellow will never pardon you for being smarter than himself and envy you, although you may faithfully spend your last penny in his behalf. You may smile at these suggestions, and call them little; but remember, my dear boy that it is not always the strongest that wins the battle, and that you are destined to fight a foe too powerful to meet in open battle and too subtle and mean to despise ambushes and stratagems.

I have taught you French and German. Before you enter upon a war, which will probably end only with your own

existence, visit the countries where these languages are spoken, and confer with those advanced master minds who have made the social iniquities of this era a deep and exclusive study. Warm your heart at their own ardor, and let the magnificence of their theories enlighten the most remote recesses of your soul; but while you revere the grandeur of their conceptions and appreciate the logic of their deductions and conclusions, keep this intellectual feast to yourself, and do not let the extremeness of their views imperil the success of your own endeavors. I do not know, my dear boy, whether I shall continue to exist after laying down this mortal coil; but if, as I fondly hope, the teachings of this Spiritualism are correct, and the finer and ethereal portion of our being survives, I shall be often with and around you, and impart to you such superior knowledge as my new and more exalted existence may enable me to secure. My fondness would urge me to continue these lines for evermore, but human frailty steps in, saying: "Halt? No further!" I obey, because I am compelled: but, in closing, I once more enjoin upon you to reflect upon, and if possible, humor the last wish of your affectionate mother,

MARY WOODS.

When Richard had finished his eyes continued to dwell upon that cherished name, but his thoughts wandered back into those days when it had been his privilege to enjoy the company and instructions of the writer. He now saw more clearly than ever, how good and how wise had been the woman he had the good fortune to call mother. He gazed with both reverence and awe at the wonderful combination of greatness and simplicity displayed in her last missive to him. While capable of grasping ideas of such magnitude as an attempt of reforming society implies, she did not lose sight of such details as the case required; details which a member of the strongest sex would probably have overlooked at the peril of a partial, if not total failure. His mind rose up to hers, and he felt the influence of this communion so strongly, that he was almost convinced of her presence. While his lips remained closed his thoughts took shape in words, addressed to her to this effect: "Mother, dear, I need not tell you that I shall obey your commands in spirit and in letter, for your spirit, freed from the fetters of earthly clay, is, no doubt, cap-

able of reading my thoughts as they take shape. I do not merely submit to your superior judgment, but glory in the work you urge me to undertake. If I err; if I fail to carry out the spirit of your grand ideas, oh! descend and enable me to perceive my mistake; and, if in your power, show to me the splendor of your immortality, thus bestowing upon my mind and body the strength necessary to carry out to the fullest extent, the plans for the amelioration, nay rejuvenation of the human race!"

He sat so still that the ticking of the clock on the wall seemed rather noisy in the deep stillness. When Mrs. Kean softly opened the door, half an hour later, Richard was in the same attitude we described. She did not wish to disturb him, and was on the point of closing the door when he turned his face to her, and said: "Come in, aunty, I have finished reading the papers half an hour ago, and was merely pondering their contents."

She obeyed, and sitting down on the chair opposite to him, looked inquiringly in his face. He thought he saw a shade of anxiety in this look, so he hastened to add: "Fear nothing, Aunt Laura, she has asked nothing improper of me."

"I knew that, of course, but my dear, she has asked something of you which will make you a martyr, or least unhappy, for the rest of your life."

"I hope not, Aunt Laura. Here is her letter: Read for yourself." She obeyed, and read the letter carefully; yes, twice, before she looked at him and said:

"A remarkable letter, Richard, and a remarkable woman."

He merely nodded, but looked at her so searchingly that she caught slightly and went on:

"You want to know what I think of it? Well, I can only add 'A dangerous letter.'"

"Dangerous?" he inquired wonderingly.

"Why yes, and I see it has done its mischief already. Tell me Richard, have you not made up your mind to obey its injunctions?"

"I have, aunt Laura, but how does that make the letter dangerous?"

"My boy," she repeated gravely, "you can hardly have read the letter carefully and attentively. Did she not tell you that dangers of all sorts would beset you in consequence of obeying its maudates?"

"Ah! I see; but that does not make the letter dangerous, does it?"

"Well, then; its powerful persuasion, its eloquence, its impressiveness, make it dangerous. Have you not yielded to its charms and vowed to obey its dictates?"

"In a measure—yes. In a measure I have vowed to obey its injunctions because they are the last ones a beloved mother left me; but the principal charm, Aunt Laura, lies in the truthfulness of its statements, the urgent necessity of the reforms it demands, and the sudden but deep conviction that a human life could not well be spent in a grander, nobler and holier cause."

His aunt looked at him with a mien intending to convey reproach. Her brow was slightly wrinkled but her mouth twitched suspiciously, and her eyes looked a good deal like a volcano, which is at rest, but from which flames may be expected to break forth at any moment. She said with a slight tremor in her voice:

"Your mother has been fair enough to mention the danger connected with such an enterprise. I now call to your attention its difficulty, nay utter hopelessness. The tilt of Don Quixote against the windmill was child's play in comparison with your task."

"I know, Aunt Laura, but you forget what my dear mother says on that point: If I cannot draw down the summit of the rock of excellence I can at least attempt to drain the swamp at its base."

At this moment the fire broke forth from the volcano. Mrs. Kean smiled upon her nephew in the most approving manner, and seizing his hand with considerable ardor she

pressed and shook it with a refreshing heartiness. "You are a noble lad, Dick," she cried with tears streaming over her cheeks, "and what I can do to further and support your plans I shall do with all my heart and strength, which is, of course, but a woman's—but—."

"A noble and resolute woman's whom I am glad and proud to acknowledge as an ally. But the windmill, aunt Laura, remember the windmill."

There was a mischievous twinkle in his eyes when he said this, but Mrs. Kean was not easily discomfited. Smiling good naturedly she responded: "Thanks for your considerate reminder. I still cling to my conviction that our undertaking is worse than that memorable tilt; but I think I have as good a right to wear a certain cap as any other member of the family, and and having once donned that becoming head-dress I am determined to do it credit. But it is getting late Dick so please put your "Roisnante" into the stable and allow me to conduct you to the garret room which, henceforth, is to be your domicile."

CHAPTER V.

PREPARATIONS.

The following morning, during the absence of Richard, who had gone to get his trunk at the depot, Mrs. Kean received the following letter:

SHOATOPOLIS, August 2d, 18—

Mrs. Laura Kean:—

Dear Madam:—I am sorry to inform you that Elinor Woods is lying dangerously ill with the brain fever, at the hospital of the Sisters of Mercy, in this city. She was found in a delirious condition in her room, about a week ago, and at once removed to the hospital. Her condition prevented me from getting any clue regarding her people, and I would not have been able to notify you of her sickness, if I had not by mere chance, discovered a book in her room, bearing on the

title page your name as the donor. The condition of your niece is precarious in the highest degree, and if you or any other relative desire to see or nurse her, you had better use dispatch, as the fever may terminate fatally.

Yours very respectfully,

JAMES SAWBONE, M. D.

The letter had been sent to Patropolis, Mrs. Kean's former residence, making it fully a week old and filling Mrs. Kean's heart with anxiety and anguish. Her first thought was of Dick, poor Dick, as she ejaculated half loud, and for a moment wavered, as to the best course to pursue. Should she conceal the news from him? For a moment she was sorely tempted to adopt that policy, feeling the keenest compassion for a lad she loved so well, a lad, moreover, whose endurance had already been taxed to the utmost. On second thought, however, she dismissed this idea as unworthy of both her and him, and instead made some hasty preparations for the journey which would in all probability result from her communication of the bad news to him. She was still engaged in filling a small valise when she heard wheels before the cottage and soon after saw her nephew's face which looked so cheerful under the influence of the errand that she quailed under the thought of the necessity of plunging him anew into grief and anxiety. Her face, however, reflected her feelings, for Richard looked at her inquiringly and asked sympathetically: "What is the matter now, aunty. Has any one bothered you during my absence?"

"I wish it was no worse Dick. I am sorry to tell you that I have a letter from Shoatopolis, informing me that your sister lies dangerously ill in a hospital of that city, and that we had better hurry if we wish to see and nurse her."

A severe blow is apt to make a second one less painful. True, Richard was much attached to his sister, but her loss could hardly be compared with that of his parents; so he struggled manfully for self possession, and asked with a calmness surprising to his relatives: "Sick? Very sick, aunty?"

"Yes Dick, she has the brain fever, and as we must go to

her without the loss of a minute, I got some of my things ready. Are you supplied with everything necessary for the journey?"

"All except money, aunty, which is an unknown quantity with me just now."

"Never mind the money Dick. I have enough for both of us, and you must allow me to be your banker."

"Well, I will aunty, provided you allow me to pay you back in due season with compound interest. Do you know when the next train for Shoatopolis leaves?"

"Yes, Dick. I examined the paper and find that the limited express leaves exactly at twelve. If you hurry we can just make it."

Instead of replying, the youth carried in the trunk from the sidewalk, hastily stuffed a few articles of clothing in his valise and ten minutes later announced himself ready for departure. His aunt charged him with her own little traveling bag, locked the door, and then led the way to the street-car which at that moment came in sight. We need not follow them step by step, but anticipate their arrival in Shoatopolis, which city they reached just thirty-six hours after their departure from Plutopolis. On inquiry they found that the hospital of the Sisters of Mercy lies a few miles outside the city limits; but as a street car line passed it in close proximity they reached the institution thirty minutes after their arrival in the city. With an anxious heart they pulled the bell, which was answered by one of the Sisters, who on their inquiry, informed them that Miss Woods was better, but hardly out of danger. She led them to Dr. Sawbone's office where they found that worthy engaged in compounding some medicine. On learning the nature of their errand, he congratulated them on the recovery of their friend, remarking with a shake of his head: "She *was* sick, you better believe. Indeed, at one time I would not have given a row of pins for her chances."

"Can we see her?"

"I reckon you can, though it is more than likely she will not recognize you. Her brain is still affected by the fever,

and it is my opinion that it may remain so, if not always, at least for a considerable length of time. Sister Clara, will you be kind enough to take these people to the room of the patient?"

The Sister started without saying a word, inviting the strangers with a motion of her hand, to follow her. After ascending a flight of stairs, and traversing several corridors, she stopped at a door and whispered: "I need not urge the necessity of caution. The patient is still very weak, and the doctor says that a sudden shock may bring on a fatal relapse."

Then she opened the door, and allowed her companions to enter a plain but clean and comfortable room, in whose far corner they discovered the object of their visit stretched on an iron bedstead. A nurse sat at her side, watching the patient, who was evidently awake, but apparently unconscious of her surroundings. Her eyes were fixed upon the ceiling. Her face was thin and white as a sheet, but still retained traces of that extraordinary beauty mentioned in her mother's diary as a source of peril and anxiety. Sister Clara whispered to the nurse, who nodded affirmatively.

"You may speak to her Friends," she said: "Sister Anna thinks she is much better, and can stand it."

Upon this Richard stepped closer to the bed-side and said gently, but with a slight tremulousness he could not totally conquer:

"Elinor! Sister Elinor: How are you this morning?"

The patient slowly turned her gaze to him, causing it to dwell there without any sigh of recognition.

"I am pretty well," she said in a very feeble voice; "but who are you? Did Arthur send you to take me to him?"

Richard knew enough of the events of the last months, to reply intelligently. "I am Richard, your brother Richard, Elinor, who has come to take care of you. And here is Aunt Laura. Don't you recognize her?"

"I want Arthur," the patient replied, without heeding his

question. "Why don't he come? Or why don't you take me to him?"

"That is the one idea she harps upon," Sister Clara whispered to Mrs. Kean; "she imagines she is married, and that her husband's name is Arthur Roberts."

"There is no imagination about it," Mrs. Kean replied in the same low tone, but rather sharply. "She *is* married, and her name *is* Roberts."

Before the Sister could reply, Richard said to the patient: "Have a little patience, sister dear. All will be right, and we shall take you where you wish to go, as soon as you are strong enough."

Then Mrs. Kean stepped forward, and said, bending lovingly over the convalescent:

"Yes, dear, get well, and we shall take you home. How do you feel to-day?"

"I am better; I am nearly well. Take me away from here and to Arthur, who will wonder what has become of me. Did you see him lately?"

"I did not child, but shall try to find him. But here is your nurse with some gruel. Think of nothing but getting well now, for as long as you are so weak the doctor will not allow you to leave here."

Then they said good bye, for the nurse persisted in the close of a conversation, which might tax her brain beyond its power of endurance. The patient manifested no interest in their departure, allowing them to leave the room without even following them with her eyes. When they had reached the corridor, Sister Clara stopped. Drawing a letter from her pocket and handing it to Mrs. Kean, she said:

"This was found in your niece's pocket when we took her to the hospital. Thinking that it might lead to the discovery of her friends, I read the contents. No one but myself knows of its existence, and as for me, my vow is a sufficient guarantee for my discretion. That is all."

With these words she resumed her office as a guide, and,

on reaching the door, parted from the visitors with a gentle "farewell!" and a benignant smile. Our friends proceeded in silence to the street car track, entered the first car which showed itself, and sank into the seat without having spoken a single word. At last Mrs. Kean said:

"I think Elinor is out of danger, and will soon be well enough to be taken home."

Richard merely nodded his head; so she continued:

"I think we had better take rooms in some hotel and wait until she is well enough to travel. What do you think of her condition?"

"I hardly know what to think. She seems to be free from fever, and yet her mind wanders. I fear it was not so much the brain fever which upset her mind, as some shock prior to her sickness, and probably the cause of it."

"I fear you are right. This letter probably contains the clue to the whole sad affair, and much as I fear its contents, we must read it, as soon as we reach the privacy of our room."

Half an hour later they had secured lodgings in the "Phœnix," and when they had changed their traveling suits and seated themselves near one of the windows of Mrs. Kean's apartment, that lady drew from her pocket the letter in question, handed it to her nephew, and said laconically: "Read." The youth obeyed, unfolded the epistle, and read as follows:

SHOATOPOLIS, July 15th, 18—.

Machére:—It pains me to inform you that the play is over. For me it has been a comedy, and it is with the desire of preserving its character that I write this letter, and say to you "Adieu." I trust you have enough good sense not to make our little play a tragedy on your part. It is a pity you are not as clever as you are beautiful; else I might not have tired of you so soon, and prolonged the drama *ad infinitum*. Dullness is very tiring, and you must admit that you are dull. Dullness worries me more than I can tell, and as I have no desire to let you suffer from the irritation produced by too much tenderness and too little "esprit," on your part, I say. "Adieu." I inclose enough money to take you home, and, if

you are prudent, you will use it for that purpose; for believe me, *ma petite*, it is dangerous to possess so much beauty without a counterpoise of wit, especially in a strange city. Trusting that you will pardon me for this rather unceremonious farewell, I beg you to believe me,

Your true friend and well-wisher,

ARTHUR ROBERTS.

"The *fiend!*" exclaimed Mrs. Kean, when Richard had finished. The young man, on his part, rose and walked the length of the room with the evident intention of quelling the fearful tempest raging in his bosom. When his aunt went on: "Oh, I wish I knew the whereabouts of this demon, to vent my wrath on him." He said: "I am glad, Aunt Laura, I do not, for if I did, I would be a murderer before night."

She quailed a little under this forced calm, more fearful than the most furious outburst of passion.

"Perhaps you are right, Richard, and it is better we are ignorant of his whereabouts. Poor child! It is sad enough to fall the prey to so wicked an intrigue, but to become the target of such cynic wit and malice, is more than I could bear. Indeed I marvel that this letter did not kill her on the spot."

"I fear, Aunt Laura, it has killed her soul. Oh, why did she not share her parents' destiny? It would be much better for her to sleep in her grave, than to live with the recollection of such satanic treachery."

"Poor darling. One might almost wish her mental vigor would not return, to save her the recollection of this foul betrayal."

"I fear it will not, Aunt Laura; as you say the inability of remembering her wrongs might almost console one for such a mental night."

Thus they conversed together, if the broken and spasmodic interchange of thoughts and feelings can be called conversation. We abstain from chronicling in detail the happenings of the next week, mentioning merely, that Elinor's physical strength returned, while the condition of her mind remained the same. Our friends paid her daily visits, staying with her for hours, but nothing in her conduct showed

that she recognized their relation to her. On the other hand, her clamor for Arthur increased from day to day, compelling Mrs. Kean and Richard to resort to little strategems and promises they had neither the power nor the wish to fulfill. On the ninth day after their arrival, the doctor declared that the patient might be removed to the hotel; but he cautioned her friends against undertaking the journey on the cars before the expiration of another week. Elinor submitted to her removal without either resistance or protestations. The frequent interviews at the hospital, and the great and universal kindness these people had shown her, ably brought about that approval which affection begets in others. It must be confessed that she did not show the least affection for them; on the contrary, her words and actions showed decided marks of selfishness, causing, however, neither comment nor wonderment on their part, perhaps because they knew of old, that selfishness had always been a prominent feature in Elinor's character, partly, perhaps, because they knew that half-witted people are much like children and clamor for the fulfillment of their whims and wishes with a pertinacity more natural than logical. At the hotel Elinor's demands for her husband's presence increased in vigor, and even the assurance that he was absent, and that a trip to Plutopolis was necessary for the realization of her wishes, failed to satisfy her entirely. She now insisted on an immediate departure, and Mrs. Kean, seeing that a protracted delay was likely to hurt Elinor more than a premature departure, yielded reluctantly to her clamor, and after consultation with Richard, fixed their departure upon the fourth day after Elinor's removal to the hotel. Berths in a palace car were secured, and so easy is the motion of these hotels on wheels, that the travelers reached Plutopolis without any visible detriment to Elinor's health. On their arrival at the cottage, Mrs. Kean made arrangements, allowing a constant, though unostations surveillance of the patient, for patient she continued to be, her mind refusing to show the least sign of change or improvement. Elinor slept in the same bed, and, at first, either Mrs. Kean or Richard ac-

companied her, when she walked in the streets. Gradually, however, this watchfulness slackened, for Elinor made no attempt to run off, or to do anything incompatible with her safety or well-being. The only thing she did, was to inquire of people whom she met, whether they had seen or heard anything of her husband. She never went far from the cottage, and the neighbors soon understood and humored her sad condition. Our friend, however, did not remain long in the neighborhood, and one morning, about three months after Elinor's recovery, the family disappeared, and no trace of it could be found. This does not show in itself a very great secrecy on their part. The world may stop a moment and notice us, especially when we have been either unusually lucky or wretched, but it soon resumes its steps, and whirls on in its mad career, as if it could not afford to lose a minute, and as if the next one would bring the solution of the many puzzles which have racked the brains of people from time immemorial, and will probably continue to rack them as long as time flows on its everlasting course. If, in addition to this restlessness, we take the trouble of covering our tracks with only ordinary care and sagacity, we are very sure to disappear from the view, as well as memory of our acquaintances. But we have to say a few words in connection with this disappearance.

When Elinor ceased to be a cause of anxiety and trouble, Mrs. Kean and Richard would often sit in consultation, talking for hours upon the best mode of accomplishing their purpose. When Richard inquired about the estate left by his parents, Mrs. Kean said: "You know already from your mother's diary, Richard, that your father's continued ill-fortune, or rather the persecutions of that fiend incarnate, had swept away the small fortune of your grandmother. When your father died, nothing but the cottage was left. Your mother, feeling her end approaching, made a will in which she appointed me executrix, directing me to sell the cottage and go with you and Elinor to some place where Cheatham could not reach you. I had to give bonds for the faithful

execution of this trust, after which I advertised the place for sale. It had steadily increased in value, enabling me to realize from its sale the cash sum of $3,000, which I put into the bank, where my own little money is deposited. It is at your disposal, Richard, for I know you will never abuse my confidence and always respect your sister's claim to half this sum."

"Thank you, aunty, you only do me justice; but I think I need not touch this money."

"But, Dick, do you not intend to finish your college course?"

"No, Aunt Laura. The little additional book learning I would gain there, is of too little consequence to waste a year on its account. What I need is knowledge of the world; knowledge which will enable me to secure gold, much gold, for mother was right when she said, that to fight the oppressors successfully, you must use their own weapons."

"No doubt, my boy; but do you not underrate the difficulty of such a speculation?"

"It is not speculation aunty, but the solid workings of the brain. You know I have always made electricity my hobby, and it is through the knowledge thus secured and further intense study of the same subject, that I mean to secure the lamp of Aladdin."

Mrs. Kean was much older than her nephew; she had seen many a similar expectation wrecked on the rocks of time; but she could not help admiring the keen and brilliant look in Richard's eyes and was loathe to discourage him. Nevertheless she felt impressed to say warningly: "Dick, my dear boy, I like your spirit; but do not forget, that thousands have thought and planned like you, only to see their air castles tumble under the first storm of adversity."

"I thank you, Aunt Laura, for warning me in this manner; but it is not mere gas which fills the bubble of my expectations."

"I carry already in my mind the design of an invention, which if only moderately successful, will yield millions."

Enthusiasm is ineffective. "And may I know the nature of this invention, Richard?" she inquired.

"Yes Aunty," he replied frankly. "You see, I trust you as much as you me; so I do not mind to tell you that I am on the point of constructing a telephone as much above the present puerile instruments, as the sun is above the moon. With it you cannot only talk with persons hundreds of milee away, but so loud and distinctly, that a person could hear you ten feet from the instrument, and recognize the voice of the speaker."

"That would be wonderful," she cried admiringly, although she had but a very dim idea of what he said. "It would pay immensely. And you say, you know pretty much how they are to be made?"

"I am not quite so far as that, Aunty, but I have discovered a substance so sensitive to sound that it will furnish a splendid medium for conveying it."

"But it will take money to work it out, Dick. You better take your half of the three thousand."

"Not unless it is absolutety necessary. And now listen Aunty, what I have thought out, regarding our next movements. If you know something better, let us hear, and we shall adopt that."

"Well, I am anxious to hear your plans."

"Here they go, then: It appears, that Mother is"—he winced a little—"was desirious of our getting out of Cheatham's way. I do not underrate the power of money. The fate of my poor parents shows it too plainly to be denied, though the workings of the scoundrel in the dark made his power greater than it would otherwise have been. I am not afraid of this man, Aunt Laura, but I admit that, in this instance, discretion may be the better part of valor. Let us disappear, then, Aunt dear, but only to rise, Phœnix like, stronger and fairer from the ashes. This is a large city. If we are careful, to cover up our tracks; if we move to another and distant part; if we finally, change our name, I defy Mr. Cheatham or any other person, to find us out."

"Change our names? Would you go to that extreme?"

"For a while—Yes. A name is a clue for any one desirous of ferreting you out. Even John Smith would not be secure, if his name were in the directory. There is no need for changing yours, however, Aunty," he continued with a smile; "for you have been here only a few months, and only a few know of you, and of your connection with us."

"And what name do you propose to adopt, Richard?"

"That of Velder, which means *Woods* in German."

"Ah, I see. Merely a translation of your patronyme."

"That's it, Aunty. You see, a fellow hates to lose track of the dear old name altogether. So this little innocent compromise comes handy."

"Have you selected on a suitable suburb, Dick?"

"I have not, Aunt Laura. In fact, anyone will do which is sufficiently remote from this. Suppose, you hunt one up, which suits you, and answers the purpose. You will be more at home than I, and it is therefore proper that your taste should be consulted in the selection."

"Thanks for your consideration, my boy, but please proceed."

"All right. I think you are aware, that I am familiar with the work of a telegraph operator."

"I heard your mother say so."

"Well, I shall at once apply for a situation in a telegraph office."

"Won't your age be in the way, Dick?"

"I think not. They employ fellows younger than I am; and then, Aunt Laura, I have made some little inventions, or rather improvements, which will probably help my case. At all events, I shall try, and that soon, for the sooner I begin my preparations the sooner I shall be able to start on the great and all-absorbing work of my life."

"And may the spirits of your sainted parents encompass you, and cheer you on."

"Amen, Aunt Laura; but it is getting late; I must go out to see where Elinor is. She has been out for quite a lit-

tle while, and we must not let her stray too far. Her great beauty might bring her harm."

"There are but few persons villanous enough to injure one blighted as she is."

"You forget the fellow who betrayed and then mocked her."

"Fortunately there are few like him. Yes, go and look after your sister, my dear boy."

We have already intimited that the family disappeared shortly after Elinor's recovery. At the same time a young man named Richard Velder took up his abode in a little cottage situated in a suburb on the opposite side of the city. With him was an elderly lady and a beautiful young woman, so beautiful, indeed, that the neighbors stared at, and then pitied her, for it was easy to see that the reason of this beautiful creature had been dethroned, and strange fancies apparently harmless, had taken the reins. The people of the neighborhood soon learned that the young man was a telegraph operator, but that was all, for the elderly lady visited nowhere, and the young operator kept so close to his home, when off duty, that the neighbors saw little or nothing of him. At first they tried to pump the weak-minded younger woman; but they only got inquiries in turn for their trouble, and when they found that nothing whatever interested her except one name—the name of Arthur Roberts—they desisted and allowed the newcomers to sink into what they wished, namely, oblivion.

It was rather a strange life which they lived. Both Mrs. Kean and Richard Velder being deprived of all intercourse with outsiders, sought, and fortunately found a rich compensation in each other's society. They talked together, studied together, and the difference in their ages as well as their acquirements, only served to give a greater charm to each other's society. Laura Kean learned much from her young friend and relative; but he, in turn, drank wisdom from the lips of a woman naturally clever, and disciplined in a school of varied experience. Richard generally returned home a little after

five o'clock p. m. His little improvements had found favor with the manager of the business, and secured Richard at once a position not only lucrative, but permitting an earlier withdrawal than the duties of his subordinates would permit. This leisure he used in the most systematic as well as scrupulous manner. Not a minute was lost. After partaking of a frugal supper, Dick would sit down for a whole hour, and study some new work on electricity, or a kindred science. When this hour had expired, he rose and entered a shed in which a small and simple gymnasium had been erected. After exchanging his day's apparel for a suit of light material he went through all the exercises forming a course of gymnastics. His aunt was regularly his spectator, and frequently Elinor would watch with her and admired with childish glee, the truly remarkable performances of her brother. At first Dick showed the akwardness of the novice; but possessing a strong and agile body and that indomitable spirit which knows of no failure or retreat, he soon became expert on all the apparatus forming his collection. His strength increased with his skill, and six months had hardly elapsed, when his aunt declared that his feats were as daring and well executed as any acrobat she had ever seen. When Richard had mastered the gymnasium, he engaged the services of a noted boxer, with the view of becoming also an adept in this useful art. As he disliked to leave the ladies, he took his lessons in the little shed, paying, of course, a much higher price for his instruction. But if he paid dearly, he profited quickly and greatly, and after the expiration of six months more, his teacher assured him that he was incapable of teaching him any more. Indeed, in the sparring in which the two engaged for practice, the teacher was as often touched as the pupil, and the former earnestly and persistently begged our young friend to assist him in an exhibition he intended giving a few weeks hence. We need not tell the reader that Dick as firmly declined, for an exposure on the stage would have at once destroyed the incognito, so essential to the successful execution of his work. He disliked sincerely to part with his

teacher, both skilled and genial, and made arrangements to have him come once a week for a whole year longer, knowing well that the cleverest performer needs practice to retain his skill.

When the boxing lessons were over Richard engaged a skillful fencer or swordsman, who came to the cottage like his predecessor.

The constant exercises on the gynasium had made Richard's body both powerful and pliant, and the art of boxing had made him wary and observant. It need, therefore, not surprise the reader, when we tell him, that Richard acquired the art of fencing with a rapidity which more than once astonished his teacher, and made him assert repeatedly that Richard must have used the foil before. It took only a few months to give to our young friend the skill of an experienced fencer, and his teacher declared more than once, that he would consider a duel with Richard a rather serious matter. After the expiration of this course Richard retained his teacher, as in the case of his predecessors, limiting, however, the meetings to weekly ones.

While thus engaged in acquiring the accomplishments mentioned, Richard did by no means neglect or overlook that of swimming and riding. Plutopolis boasts of many public baths, some of which possess deep and spacious basins. It was there that he improved his skill in swimming. He always chose hours when the bath was poorly attended or entirely vacant. He was by no means vain, but he knew that his stalwart, well shaped figure would attract attention, which an unusual display of skill would augment. Nevertheless he became at times the center of attraction of the few visitors present. They insisted upon addressing him, showing so much friendliness and such an earnest wish to cultivate his acquaintance, that it really pained him to thwart them.

His riding lessons he took early on Sunday mornings. He found it a little difficult to meet a competent instructor sufficiently emancipated from the prejudices of the masses, to accept a pupil at that unusual hour. Richard's liberal offer

of double pay, finally overcame the master's scruples, and after a few lessons he had taken such a fancy to Richard, that he would probably have retained him at half price. Here as in the other arts Richard's well disciplined body did him great service. His well-knit form, his erect attitude, his utter fearlessness and great aptitude attracted his teacher's attention from the start, and after a few weeks he declared that Richard would miss his vocation, if he did not devote himself to a circus rider's profession. Richard told him laughingly that his ambition ran in another channel, but that he was determined to acquire the circus rider's skill, if it took him a coon's age. The other took the hint, and gave his instructions accordingly. In consequence our friend became an unusually expert horseman before the year was over. No horse, however vicious, could throw him. He could ride bareback like a Comanche Indian, and there was no trick he could not perform on horseback. In this instance, as before, Richard found it very difficult to curb his teacher's desire, to parade him before his friends particularly, and the world generally, and more than once he lamented what he called our friend's foolish bashfulness.

There was one more art, in which Richard tried to perfect himself during all this time, namely, the art of markmanship. He had all the qualities necessary to excel in it, namely, a keen eye, a steady hand, and nerves of iron. No dissipation had made inroads upon his constitution. Need we wonder, therefore, that in an incredibly short time Richard could hit the center of an ace with both rifle and revolver, not once or occasionally, but as regularly as the pendulum swings from a regulator. This skill he acquired at home at leisure moments and with an ease and nonchalance astonishing his aunt, who soon considered him a knight "sans peur et sans reproche."

CHAPTER VI.

AN INTERMEZZO.

It was about six months after the occupation of the little cottage by our friends, when the trio was augmented into a quartette by the arrival of a wee little fellow, who made a good deal of noise in proportion to his size, and necessitated the hiring of a nurse, as the young mother manifested a strange indifference to the new comer, and could therefore hardly be trusted with his sole care. After her recovery from her confinement, Elinor manifested a stronger desire for the society of him she called so affectionately her husband, and it was with the utmost difficulty that Mrs. Kean and Richard could persuade her, to nurse the child.

This freak filled them both with wonderment, and the disturbance of the equilibrium of Elinor's mind was indeed the only, though highly bitter ingredient in the cup of contentment which the preparations above described gave both to aunt and nephew. They consulted several physicians who had made insanity a specialty; but all agreed, that nothing could be done in the matter, although there was a bare possibility that a severe mental shock, such as had produced the malady, might effect its cure. Such a shock, however, was coupled with the greatest danger, both to Elinor's life and mental condition, and as likely to make her a raving maniac as a sane person. For this reason they counseled patience, declaring that time might eventually improve her mental capacity.

As the boy grew older Elinor began to take more interest in him, and when at the age of eighteen months, he commenced to walk, coo, and lisp the names of the inmates of the cottage, she became more absorbed in him and his welfare, permitting the dismissal of the nurse. Mrs. Kean purchased a baby carriage, and after that Elinor could be seen every day wheeling the infant through the neighboring streets, or the lanes of the adjacent park. When asked how she wished to name the boy, she suggested the propriety of calling him

Arthur, after his father, but yielded when they urged the adoption of "George" in memory of her father. She did not seem aware that her father had been called that way; in fact it is doubtful whether she was aware of ever having had parents; but the force of habit, and the custom of looking to her friends for guidance, sufficed to make her yield the point. George grew to be a child of unusual beauty, and when the young mother wheeled him over her customary route, she attracted the attention of all the passers-by. This finally caused much uneasiness to Richard and his aunt, since the probability of her meeting some old acquaintance was strong. So one day, about two years after the removal to their present domicile—Richard sat down at his aunt's side, and said: "Aunt Laura, don't you think that the attractive beauty of our pets becomes too dangerous for our incognito, to permit our continued stay at this place?"

"I have thought so all along, Richard; but what can we do? One part of the city is as bad as another in this respect, you know."

"You are right, Aunt Laura, and for that very reason we ought to leave the city."

"Leave the city, Richard? And what about your office?"

"I have thought it all over, aunty. My preparations are about complete, and I can think of taking another step towards the goal which beckons far away. Come with me to my workshop, if you please."

"He rose and led her to a small room partitioned off from the shed containing the gymnasium. It was carefully locked, but opened to a key which he drew from his pocket. After a glance of precaution over the premises, Richard opened the door, and led his expectant relative into his sanctum. She had been there often before, but seen merely detached parts of the machine now attracting her attention. Richard gazed fondly at his work, then with pardonable exultation at his aunt and said with a slight tremor in his voice: "There she is, Aunt Laura. All that is left for me to do is the procure-

ment of a patent, and then—take my word for it— the golden stream will begin to flow into our coffers."

"*Our* coffers. The dear boy never thinks of himself alone."

"Of course I do not. If I did, do you think I could entertain the plans which permeate my being and fill my brain to suffication? No, aunty, this belongs to you next, and then to all my suffering brethren, and may this stream of gold help me to remove the wrongs which their oppressors' gold has done them."

"Amen! But say, Dick, will your minority not interfere with the procurement of such a patent?"

"I have thought of that, aunty. It will be necessary to secure a declaration of majority from the courts. As I now bear the name of Velder, and, as such, have no claim to any property, there will be no difficulty in the way, I reckon?"

"But if your true name comes to light afterwards: Is there no danger of losing it all?"

"We must run the risks, Aunt Laura, for it would never do to use my proper name now. Bedsides I shall demand such security from the purchaser of the patent, that I can defy any scheme to rob me."

"And when the patent is secured Richard?"

"We shall leave this country for a year or so, and sojourn in Germany and France in obedience to mother's wishes, that is, if you approve of such a step."

"With all my heart, Dick; but is not this a valuable loss of time?"

"No, Aunt Laura, I think not. The old world contains the master minds, which now agitate society with new ideas. I feel I need all the information on this subject I can obtain. I need, moreover, the inspiring influence of these mental giants, and therefore deem the projected voyage a gain, rather than a loss."

"And you propose to start soon?"

"As soon as the legal steps have been taken. I shall seek the counsel of a lawyer to-morrow."

The man of the law informed him that there was nothing in the way to his securing a declaration of majority, and offered his assistance in the matter. His efforts were successful, and, a few days later, Richard had in his pocket a document, declaring that a certain Richard Velder was entitled to carry out the functions of majority, excepting the right of suffrage, for which he did not care. Next he boxed his precious machine, and departed with it for Patropolis, deeming it prudent to superintend in person the formalities connected with the securement of so important a patent. He expected that his invention would create a sensation, but the reality by far surpassed his expectations. The officials of the patent office stared in wonderment and Richard felt quite relieved, when the caveat for the patent was in his possession. When he took up the papers of the capital next morning, he found a sensational notice in all of them, setting forth in glowing language the novelty and importance of the new invention, and then felt that he had become famous in one night. The same fluid which had enabled him to achieve such a grand success, had heralded this success to every corner of Occidentia, causing his name to be read by millions of eyes, and to be spoken by millions of tongues. For a few minutes he felt quite oppressed, but soon his fearlessness reasserted itself, and he straightened up as if he meant to say: "Well, what of it? Here I am, ready to combat you, enemies of our race. Wait a little and you will hear more startling things about 'Yours truly' yet." He had hardly finished his breakfast when several reporters called to interview him, causing him to smile at the importance he had so suddenly acquired. Nor did he bluff these attaches of the press, but explained to them, to the best of his,—nay, *their* ability, the nature of his invention. In consequence, the papers of the next morning gave a highly flattering description of Mr. Velder, the inventor of the new telephone which threatened to revolutionize business of every description. Richard remained in Patropolis until his case was decided. Strange to say, there was no claimant to dispute the originality of his invention. The fact was: The in-

genuity of his method, and the brilliancy of his conception had taken away the breath of the public, as it were, and there was really no one bold enough to dispute the claim. Long before Richard was in possession of his patent, he received visits and offers from individuals and corporations. While some proposed to purchase his right, others offered him a royalty, and again others suggested the propriety of forming a gigantic stock company, with him at the head. These offers did not turn the head of our young friend. He listened to them politely, and frequently was amused at the ingenuity of some of them, but he declined all as premature, declaring that he would not sell the hide of the bear, until the bear was killed. In due season, however, the papers, making him a manifold millionaire in everybody's opinion, were handed to him, and the next morning saw him on the train to Plutopolis. Even on the train he was beset by beople wanting to buy his patent, and when he arrived in Plutopolis, he had to use considerable ingenuity to escape the crowd of speculators lying in wait for him. When he reached his home he sank into a chair, after an affectionate greeting to his dear ones, and said with fiegned horror in his voice:

"Aunty dear, pack our trunks without delay, unless you wish your poor nephew crushed under the burden of his new fame."

"Is it really so bad, Richard?"

"Well, you will see for yourself; if these vampires succeed in ferreting us out. Haven't you seen anybody nosing around?"

"Not to my knowledge, Richard," she replied with a laugh.

"Well, they will discover me before long; so get everything ready."

But you will wish to dispose of your patent first?

"Yes, Aunt Laura; but remember that I have at least a thousand offers to choose from, and have only waited for your advice before accepting one of them."

"That's very considerate in you, Richard; but I am hardly competent to decide so weighty a matter."

"Indeed you are Aunt Laura; much more able than many others."

"What do you think of a million a year?"

"You are joking, Richard; you do not mean to tell me that you received such an offer?"

"Not exactly, but rest assured, dear Aunt, that I shall accept nothing less."

She looked at him in amazement, but evidently failed to find words to express her surprise.

"I shall go to the office to morrow," he resumed, "and probably close a bargain before I return. The manager wrote to me, begging me not to decide before I had met him, as he was prepared to make me a splendid offer. But now, Aunty, let us talk of something else, for I have heard this subject so continually and persistently discussed that I am completely worn out."

The next morning Richard went to the telegraph bureau at his usual hour, but if he had expected to reach his desk in the usual manner he was much mistaken. Everybody stared at him from the messenger boy to the manager, who shook his hand cordially and congratulated him on his grand achievement.

"To think of it, that you had this in contemplation for months, and never breathed a word of it to anydody. Sly dog, that you are. Well, you got my letter, of course?"

"I did, sir."

"And the patent is still yours?"

"It is, sir."

"That's right, sir, that's right. Come into my office; I expect a party shortly that will give you all your grand invention is worth."

"I shall be glad to meet him. And what is your own estimate of the value of my patent?"

"Oh, Mr. Velder, in my estimation its value is so stu-

penduous that it makes me dizzy to think of it. Well, what is it?"

A card was handed him, on the reading of which his face brightened. Rising with alacrity, he said to the boy: "Show him in, Charley." Then, turning to Richard and rubbing his hands gleefully, he remarked: "I knew he would be early; such tid-bits as yours are not in the market every day."

He could not proceed, for at this moment the door opened and a middle-aged man stepped into the apartment. He posessed rather handsome features, but his eyes bore a cruel expression, and his lower face was rather heavy. The manager hastened to shake hands with him; then turning and conducting him towards Richard, who was still standing, he introduced: "Senator Cheatham—Mr. Richard Velder."

It is such moments as this which try a person's mettle. We read of cases where a tiger suddenly rose from the jungle and then crouched down for a spring upon the intruder; or, where a cobra wound around its victim's leg, ready to insert its deadly fang; where an avalanche slid down the mountain-side, threatening with instant death the inhabitants of the valley. We read of the rare presence of mind displayed on such occasions by the parties thus menaced; but we doubt sincerely whether their ordeal was more trying than that through which Richard passed at this moment. True, the peril in this instance lay with Cheatham, that is, the peril of life; but with our young friend lay the much more imminent danger of yielding to a terrible though, natural and probably justifiable outburst of passion, threatening with the victim's life plans, so grandly conceived and so carefully matured. If Richard had afterwards been asked to describe the sensations of that trying moment he would have been compelled to confess his inability. True, he could have told us that a sudden tempest rose within him, resembling in suddenness and vehemence the cyclone which springs into existence without a moment's warning. That this fury threatened to overthrow all resistence, leveling the resolutions of months and years, and only checked by that barrier, an iron will; but his account would,

of necessity, have been as vague as his sensations. Only when the tempest had been checked; when the reason had regained control, his ideas also resumed that clearness necessary for a perspicuous account. He could and would have told you that his thoughts from that moment ran thus: "This man is unworthy of such a sacrifice as the renunciation of my plans would be. He is only worthy of my contempt, and such contempt shall be unsparingly meted out to him. He comes to purchase your patent. Very well; it is the working of grim Nemesis that sends him in my way, to aid with his own gold the downfall of the ruinous monopolies enjoyed by him and his cast."

The human mind is a very rapid worker. Many thoughts can flash through it in a wink of time. We hear of dreams lasting only a few seconds, and yet reviewing in that short space of time the dreamer's entire life. We need not wonder, then, that these thoughts of Richard occupied only a moment or two, and that he had fully recovered his self possession when the newcomer advanced towards him and holding out his hand, said, in bland and winning accents:

"Happy to meet you, Mr.—Velder, did you say Mr. Phelps?"

"Velder, Richard Velder, Senator."

We have intimated that Richard had regained his self-possession, but dissimulation was so foreign to his nature that he would not have feigned friendliness to this man for all the wealth of Plutopolis. Ignoring, therefore, the proffered hand, he contented himself with acknowledging the other's advances by a slight and distant bow. Mr. Phelps saw, and marvelled at this reticence, but thinking that the presence of the great man had embarrassed his young friend, he cried out cheerfully:

"Sit down, gents, sit down. I for my part, like to be comfortable when I transact business, particulary business of such importance. I see Senator you left your couch early this morning. Smelled a fat plum, eh?"

"The fatness of the plum depends upon this gentleman's

demands. I should think," replied the visitor assuming an air of affability, although he too had noticed Richard's coldness, and might perhaps have resented it under ordinary circumstances, or if he had not attributed it to much the same cause as the manager, who hastened to reply in the same cheerful tone:

"Oh, trust me for that, Senator. I have known Mr. Velder fully two years, and always found him a highly sensible and reasonable fellow."

He looked at Richard as if he expected an acknowledgement of the compliment, causing the young man to smile and to say, "you flatter me Mr. Phelps."

"Not at all, Velder, not at all; but we must not waste the Senator's time, and launch into "medias res," as we used to say at college. Well, to cut matters short, Mr. Velder, Senator Cheatham and myself represent a syndicate which wishes to purchase your patent, and if you will have the goodness to inform us at what figure you will part with it we shall soon see whether we can make a bargain or not."

"That is spoken to the point, Mr. Phelps, and I will answer with the same frankness and plainness. The patent is at the disposal of your friends for the consideration of a million dollars annually, for seventeen consecutive years, these payments to be backed by ample security."

Mr. Phelps pointed his lips for a significant whistle; but a look upon Richard's face induced him to abandon the attempt. The young man sat there so unconcerned as if millions were mere playthings, good enough to fill some idle minutes. True, he smiled pleasantly, but there was something in his mien which betokened a fixed purpose and somehow told the manager that joking would not much mend the matter. So he changed the whistle into a cough and said with a somewhat sickly smile:

"A million, *did* you say a million, Mr. Velder?"

"I said *a million*, Mr. Phelps."

"But that is preposterous, Velder. Let us look at this thing in the right light: First and foremost.--"

"I do not see the use in looking at it in any light, Mr. Phelps" Richard interrupted the manager with a bland smile, but great firmness of tone. "A million a year is my price. If it does not suit you, well, you have the privilege to decline, and I assure you that I shall be the last person to reflect on you."

"But a million, friend, *a million*. Aint you a little bit too hard now?"

A slight shadow of weariness, if not disgust flitted over Richard's face. "See here, Mr. Phelps," he said impressively, "you are no doubt aware that there are nearly 70 millions of people living in Occidentia. Of these at least *one* million will be glad to pay you $30 a piece annually for the use of my telephone. You are too good a calculator not to know that that signifies the sum of thirty millions in your pocket every year. Allowing the expenditure of ten millions for the poles, wire and fixtures, and you have a profit of twenty millions even the first year. If I wanted to take the trouble of managing this thing myself, I could clear five times the amount I asked of you."

"But Mr. Velder," the manager began to remonstrate anew, when a gesture of the Senator stopped him. If Mr. Cheatham was a friend, he possessed at least the sagacity of a friend, and this sagacity told him that any attempt to jew this young man would be lost breath and time. Besides, this dauntless independence pleased him, and there is little doubt that he would have been ready and glad to form a liking for Mr. Velder, if that individual would only have allowed it. That this was not the case, was evident, although it was not so much sagacity as intuition which made the Senator aware of this fact. However, this might have been, the Senator saw that the calculations of the young man were rather under, than overrated, and he therefore resolved to close the bargain at his own figures. So he said:

"Mr. Phelps, Mr. Velder is correct. The purchase of his patent at his figures would insure a very handsome dividend,

and I am inclined to report favorably to the meeting called at eleven this morning. What do you say, Mr. Phelps?"

The manager was destined to a surprise this morning. This manner of doing business was so novel to him, especially as Mr. Cheatham was concerned, that it dazed him completely, causing him to stammer some incoherent words of reply, which the Senator construed as an approval, for he rose and said:

"Very well then, let us go, Mr. Phelps. It is ten now, and if we tarry we shall be late. Can we meet you here this afternoon, Mr. Velder?"

"I am at your disposal."

"Very well, let it be three then. Ready Mr. Phelps?"

The manager nodded, and the pair was on the point of leaving the room when Richard said:

"One moment, Mr. Phelps; Do you desire my services in the bureau?"

"Of course Velder, of course. If you will be kind enough to attend to your former duties for the present, we'll get ready for you the high position we wish you to fill hereafter."

"Nay, Mr. Phelps, you misconstrue my question, if you actually need my services I am disposed to give them to you until you can find a substitute. I intend traveling in Europe and am therefore obliged to decline your tempting offer."

"Ah, that is too bad, really too bad. Well, suit yourself my friend, we shall be glad to have you stay as long as you see proper. Au revoir."

With this the pair left, and Richard returned to the cottage where Mrs. Kean listened to his recital with a mixture of wonderment and alarm.

"To think, that he of all men, should want to buy your patent. Supposing he had recognized you? You look a good deal like your father, Richard."

"Well, they say, a robber is never safer than when in company of a policeman," he replied with a laugh.

"And you think he'll buy your patent?"

"I know he will."

"And you will let him have it?"

"Yes aunty. It gives me a grim satisfaction to think that I shall fight his clan with his own money."

"Then we ought to get ready for the voyage without delay?"

"Even so aunty. How many saratogas will you need?"

"Oh, two will do, one for yourself and one for Elinor and me you know."

"I have all I want aunty."

"And so have we, you bad boy. Behave, or you shall have no pie for dinner."

"I cave, as the boys say."

At this moment Elinor entered the room leading little George by the hand. A prettier child could not easily be found. His curly brown hair; a pair of bright large eyes of the same color, a snowy complexion and rosy cheeks formed an ensemble rarely found. Nor was his mother a picture of ordinary beauty. Features of rare symmetry and combines, hair of an auburn hue, teeth white as ivory, and a figure of faultless proportions, would have presented an almost irresistible charm, if a certain vagueness of expression and a constantly wandering gaze had not somewhat marred the sight. Little George was very fond of his uncle Dick, and no sooner had he spied him when he crowed lustily, and letting go his mother's hand, ran to embrace his knees with his little arms. Richard at once lifted him up saying: "Hallow, how is master George?"

"Me well, me want dollaw."

"Want a dollar, you little imp; what do you want a dollar for?"

"Buy shooty, go *bang*."

This bang was loud enough to permit the conclusion that the shooty he wanted to buy, was at best, a ten-inch caliber gun. It caused them all to laugh, and then the little group sat down in evident good humor to eat a frugal, though savory dinner. Elinor's condition had ceased to grieve her friends.

Time dulls everything, pleasure as well as sorrow, and both Richard and Mrs. Kean had learned to look at the beau-

tiful woman with resignation. During the meal Richard addressed his sister, saying:

"Elinor, we shall go to Europe before long. How do you like the idea of crossing the ocean and seeing the grand and pretty sights of the old world?"

"Shall we meet Arthur there?"

If Richard was annoyed by this question he did not show it in his face, nor in his voice, as he replied: "Possibly, sister, though not very likely. I wish you would make yourself familiar with the probability of his death. If he lived, would he have stayed away all this time?"

"It is rather strange, and I cannot account for it. But he is not dead, Richard, indeed he is not dead, and one of these days you will see him."

Richard looked at his aunt as if he meant to say: "The same sad old story—when will it end?" After dinner he returned to Mr. Phelps' office, where Senator Cheatham made his appearance, just as the clock struck three.

"I like punctuality," he said, with a smile, a circumstance at which we need not wonder, as every one of his minutes was worth a dollar, or brought him one at least. After disposing of his hat he began without any preliminaries:

"My friends have accepted your terms, Mr. Velder. Will you please inform me how you want your money, and what security you demand?"

"An annual credit for $250,000 in four of the leading banks of Plutopolis, with the guarantee of these banks that this credit will continue for seventeen years."

"Agreed," replied the Senator, with a readiness which caused Mr. Phelps to start in spite of himself. "Have you any choice as to these banks?"

"None whatever. Let it be the First, Second, Third and Fourth National Banks of this city."

"Very well. I shall deposit in these banks five per cent. bonds of Occidentia to the amount of $25,000,000, with the instructions to withhold these for seventeen years, and pay to

you or your order the interest accruing. Is that satisfactory?"

"Perfectly so."

"Then I beg you to accompany me and Mr. Phelps to my lawyer, to sign the papers, which have already been drawn up. One more question: I understand that you are now working out some other problems. May I ask whether this report is true?"

A shade of wonderment passed over Richard's face, and he replied with a slight vexation in his tone: "It *is* true, but how it leaked out is altogether beyond my comprehension."

The Senator smiled a smile of superiority. "You see we statesmen have our channels of information; but that is neither here nor there. Will you give us the refusal for these inventions when patented?"

Richard felt considerably annoyed and replied coldly: "I do not wish to bind myself by any promises, but will give you notice and ample time for negotiation when the invention is ready for the market."

"Thank you, that is all I ask, and now, gentlemen, let us seek the man of law."

CHAPTER VII.

ABROAD.

A week later our friend floated on the Atlantic Ocean, en-route for the old world. They had embarked on the staunch steamer *Sea Foam*, and were enjoying the novelty of the scene and their surroundings. It was early spring, the twenty-fifth of March, when we join them. They were seated on deck, wrapped in their mantles as the weather was raw and the north west wind fresh. We cannot well imagine a greater change than that which had taken place in Richard's circumstances in less than two weeks. From a salaried employee of a telegraph company he had turned into a Croesus,

for a man who commands an income of a million dollars annually may well be termed a Croesus. Nor was this all. He had applied for patents to the governments of England, France, Germany, Austria and Russia, and was reasonably sure of realizing another million annually from the sale of his invention in these countries. But had this sudden change in his circumstances effected a change in him? We are well aware, that not one person in a hundred could experience such a change and not be influenced by it. We know too well the charm of luxury and indolence, to say flippantly dispise it, and defy the world to tempt us. Nor can we exactly say that Richard had entirely escaped the influence of his accession to sudden wealth, but if the reader thinks that it had made him vain, filled him with a longing for ease and dissipation, we indignantly repel the insinuation and say: It had only made him stronger, more self conscious, and confident of ultimate success. We must not forget that his great and sudden wealth had not come from a freak of fortune, such as the legacy of a relative, or the purchase of a lottery ticket. On the contrary, it was the result of long and intense thought and study, of pluck and perseverence; of genius and inspiration. If it came suddenly, it had been long and confidently anticipated and was in a measure, the offspring of legitimate industry. We do not underrate the importance of these premises, dear reader, but do not smile sarcastically either, intimate that Richard Velder would then have been proof against the smile of fickle fortune. If we have drawn his portrait with moderate skill and accuracy, the reader must be aware by this time that if we fail to invest him in our hero, the fault lies with us, and not with him.

As the travelers were thus seated together discussing the weather, the ship and other points of similiar magnitude and importance, the captain approached the little group, and after lifting his cap, took a seat at Richard's side. "Well Mr. Velder," he began with a benevolent smile fitting well to his rotundity and the natural kindness depicted on his feature: "I suppose you are in for it now, and will not return until the

cup of pleasure which the old world offers has been drained to the bottom."

"You are mistaken, Captain Seawater. I do not go to Europe to dissipate, but to study."

The captain's face assumed an expression of blank surprise. "To study? ' he drawled out, as if something had impeded his free utterance; "To study?"

There was also an element of incredulity embodied in his manner of utterance so that Richard felt slightly piqued.

"Why captain, what is the matter with you?" he inquired, a little testily; "do I look so much like a libertine that you persist in considering me one?"

"A millionaire and *study*," exclaimed the captain, without heeding Richard's question, "why that beats the Dutch all hollow."

Richard could not help laughing at this expression of honest wonderment.

"I see the point now, captain, and take it all back. I really cannot blame you for your wonderment, for, as the world goes, millions and study do not go together. Nevertheless, I only spoke the truth, when I told you that I visit Europe for the sole purpose of study, and hard study in the bargain."

The captain went on shaking his head. "I must believe you, if you say so," he said slowly and emphatically. "I suppose money is no object with you, else I would advise you to hire out to Barnum. The announcement that a millionaire went to Europe merely to *study* would draw full houses, I bet."

He uttered these words in so droll a manner, and squinted so cunningly from the corner of his eyes, that Richard could not help bursting into laughter. But when the captain had left he sobered down very quickly, for the joke had a very serious side as well. Great wealth and application hardly ever go together, excepting perhaps the feverish exertions of the brain to heap millions upon millions. He could, however, not follow this train of thought as other passengers crowded

around him and engaged him and the ladies in conversation. He had already become accustomed to the adulteration which society offers to the wealthy, and was not vain enough to attribute to his personal excellence the attention shown to him. Nevertheless, it may be truthfully said, that much of his attention was due to the man himself. It was not so much his physical make up which attracted the eyes of the people, as the calm and well poised bearing which always marked his appearance. His gaze did not only show intelligence, but steadiness of purpose and the consciousness of his intentions. There was nothing wavering about him but a decision showing that he did not merely know what he was about, but also convinced of the rectitude of his purposes and the correctness of his views. In other words, he was positive, and as the majority of people are negative, he attracted them. However, we have no time to speculate upon his character, to say nothing of the questionable wisdom of betraying at this early date, what will, or at least ought to manifest itself in the course of this narrative. We therefore pass over the rest of the voyage, which ended without any accident, and let the party land in Southampton merely to see them on board the cars for London, the metropolis of the world. Is it not rather significant and characteristic of human self-importance, that we call this little speck, the *world?* What a field for speculative philosophy, from which we might pass on to such reflections as the sight and nature of such a city naturally suggests. What a concentration of the highest and noblest, as well as the lowest and meanest in human nature. Fortunately for the reader we have not the time to indulge in such meditations. We have just time and space to state that Richard found no difficulty in disposing of his patent, for the use of which he received the sum of five hundred thousand pounds sterling. After this sale our friends left for France, arriving in Paris a day later. As Richard intended to remain in that city several months, he took lodgings, engaging the services of a restaurateur, who was to send their "menu" to their rooms. Here also he

found a ready purchaser for his patent, although the sum was only one-fifth as large as that John Bull had paid.

We do not wish to tire the reader by describing in detail his negotiations in the other countries mentioned above. It may suffice to state that he realized in all, the handsome sum of five million dollars from the sale of his patent, this sum representing the total compensation for the period protected by the patent. These negotiations occupied several weeks, necessitating journies to the capitals. As the ladies were tired from the voyage, Richard insisted on making these journeys alone, assuring them that they would have ample opportunity to visit Vienna and Berlin before their final return to Occidentia.

On his return from these journeys Richard discovered some change in the aspect of affairs. Elinor seemed much more nervous, and her eyes wandered about with a restlessness which alarmed him. She said nothing calculated to give him a clue to this alarming change; but Mrs. Kean benefitted by her first private interview with him, to enlighten him as to the cause. Let us listen to her explanation which ran as follows:

"After your departure Richard, Elinor and I made it a point to be as much in the open air as the weather would permit. You know the parks and boulevards of Paris are proverbially beautiful, and we three enjoyed their beauty to our heart's content. George ran about while we sat on a bench and gazed with never flagging interest upon a panorama which perhaps has no rival, certainly no superior on earth. One day, let me see, it was yesterday a week ago, we sat as usual on a bench of the park when I was attracted by some charming nick nacks offered for sale not fifty steps from our bench. I told Elinor not to stir until I returned which would certainly not be later than ten minutes. I walked to the stand and had just made my selection when a piercing shriek from Elinor's lips attracted my attention. I perceived that a crowd had gathered around the bench and hastened to the spot, trembling with fear that something had befallen either her or the

child. When I drew near I heard her cry: 'Arthur, Arthur! Oh let me go good people. I saw Arthur, my husband, and must go to him. Let me go, let me go!' By this time I had broken through the circle of curious spectators, and released the poor girl from the grasp of those who held her, probably from motives of sympathy, but certainly with a bad effect upon her nerves, as she became more agitated every moment. I begged the people to withdraw, but as I spoke English, and they understood nothing but French, my entreaties had no effect, until fortunately an Englishman broke through the crowd asking me what was the matter, and whether he could be of any assistance to me. I explained to him Elinor's mental condition, and he interpreted my words to the crowd, which at once began to disperse, displaying a consideration unknown in Occidentia. Elinor, however, continued to clamor for Arthur, insisting vehemently that she had seen him, and declaring her intention of searching for him. It was in vain to reason with her; so I begged our English friend to procure a carriage in which we drove from one end of the park to the other; Elinor watching the people with the keeness of the hawk ready to pounce upon its prey. Fortunately nothing had happened to George who might easily have been lost in the crowd, so I did not mind the drive which lasted several hours, as Elinor could not be persuaded to go home until she was completely exhausted. Ever since that unfortunate occurrence she has been in a state of feverish excitement, and you may well believe that I awaited your return with anxiety and impatience."

"And do you think, aunt Laura, that she really saw him?"

"It is hard to tell. If she did not see him she surely must have seen somebody very much like him."

"Did she describe his appearance?"

"She says he was on horseback, in company with a number of other gentlemen."

"Hm, this is unfortunate. The rogue may really be in Paris, in which case she may meet him again. I hardly know what to think or do."

"How would it do, then, to visit such other places as are in our programme, and spend the last month of our allotted time in Paris?"

"We are as likely to meet him in Vienna or Berlin as here, Aunt Laura. Besides it would be cowardly to run on his account. No, if we have to face him, we may as well face him here. You know," he added with a grim smile, "the French are very indulgent to the noble practices of the duel, and I may in that way get rid of a very troublesome nuisance."

She knew he was only jesting, but nevertheless a slight shudder persisted in creeping over her body. She knew him to be courageous to fearlessness, and high-strung as well, so it was hard to tell how an encounter might terminate. As soon as it was decided that they would stay, Richard entered upon the course mapped out with his usual zest and energy. He engaged a teacher of French, which language both Elinor and he had learned to speak and read from their mother. Elinor had never attained much proficiency, but Richard spoke French pretty well, and felt confident that a sojourn of six months in Paris would enable him to converse fluently in that pretty tongue, a tongue consisting of so many stereotyped expressions, which you must know, to know French. Its poverty makes it easy to master and Richard was determindd to accomplish this task in the short period allotted. He persuaded Elinor to join him, thinking the effort might prove a diversion and draw her mind away from the all-absorbing thought filling it. Mrs. Kean also became a student of her own free will, being, however, a mere spectator during the lesson of her relatives, and claiming the teacher's attention after they had finished. The tutor came early so as not to interfere with the many subjects claiming the attention of at least one of his pupils during the day. Richard rejoiced to see that the effect of this mental discipline of his sister was beneficial and marked. She progressed much more rapidly than he had anticipated, and from that time, often read the papers or such books as the teacher suggested or recom-

mended. When the lesson was over, Richard would mount a fine steed he had purchased, and ride an hour or two, using this mode of locomotion, to frequent such places, as demanded his presence in the execution of his designs. He made the acquaintance of such men of note as had attracted attention or won fame through the social radicalism of their views. Thus he received many a valuable suggestion, but never allowed his mind to become so totally engrossed by these views as to lose sight of the ground under his feet. The more he studied these questions, the more deeply he became convinced of the wisdom, good sense, and practicability of his mother's suggestions. We have not the time to accompany him step by step; no time to record his increasing skill in the manly sports he had practiced at home. He no longer took private lessons at his lodgings, but frequented several institutions, where gymnastics and fencing were taught and practiced. Boxing is at a discount in the metropolis of fashion, but fencing flourished there luxuriantly and has reached a degree of perfection known nowhere else. Richard soon became well known in the most famous of these schools, and the master was not slow in numbering him among his most promising pupils. Indeed after a few months "monsieur le maitre" pronounced him as near perfect as he could make him, and acknowledged his inability to touch him in any vital spot. A shooting gallery was connected with the establishment, and there Richard spent much of the time he allowed himself for recreation. He took a keen interest it firearms of all kinds, placing, however, the revolver at the head. With it as well as with the rifle, he was absolutely certain of his aim, and it was with a a mixture of respect and envy that the habitues of the establishment viewed his certainty of aim, a certainty scarcely ever wavering. There was quite a sprinkling of his countrymen among the patrons of "monsieur le professeur," and Richard found it difficult to repel totally, and in every instant the advances they made with the evident purpose of gaining his intimacy and securing his friendship. Fond as he was of sport in the abstract, or rather the tools and instruments designed

to execute it, he, as a rule, found little attraction in its average devotees, especially when they belonged to the so-called "jeunessedoree." As it is this class particularly, which apes the sportsman par excellence, Richard had little heart ache to decline politely, but firmly the most pressing invitations showered upon him. There was one young fellow, however, frequenting this salle, a countryman, who had such pleasant manners, and so much good sense, that Richard could not find it in his heart to shake him off entirely. On one occasion he accompanied him to his lodgings, a step, implying of course his readiness to receive Mr. Maxwell in his own quarters. It was about two weeks after the exciting scene in the park, that the porter sent to him Mr. Maxwell's card. It was in the afternoon. He had returned from a long ride, and had begun to write a business letter, when the card was handed him. He liked Mr. Maxwell very much, and though at first a feeling of regret rose in his breast, he dismissed it as rapidly as it had sprung up, and told the servant to show the visitor in. The ladies were out on a drive, so Maxwell could not annoy them. Laying aside his writing materials, he rose to receive him, but was surprised to see two gentlemen enter the room instead of the one announced. He must have looked his surprise, for Maxwell was evidently a little embarrassed, when he said apologetically:

"Pardon me, Mr. Velder, if I over step my privileges, and bring this gentlemen, a countryman of ours. We were riding together and when I told him that I intended making you a call he insisted so strenuously on making your acquaintance that I could not well refuse."

"Say nothing more about it, Maxwell; and who is it I have the pleasure of meeting?"

"Ah, I forgot: Permit me to introduce Mr. Cyrus Cheatham, of Plutopolis. Mr. Cheatham, Mr. Velder."

We need hardly remark that feelings of both repugnance and anger rose in Richard's breast, on hearing this ominous name, which he naturally coupled with the enemy of his family; but the reader is surely aware by this time that our

young friend was not likely to show, by mind or word, the displeasure he felt. With one keen and searching glance he took the measure of Mr. Cheatham, Jr., and what he saw was this: Cyrus Cheatham had inherited the comely features of his father, and a constant contact with the wealthier classes had given him polished manners and the assurance of the man of the world. These advantages, however, could not disguise the fact that dissipations of all kinds had made heavy inroads upon his constitution, and that he was old beyond his years. Blue rings underlined his eyes, and his motions and gestures betrayed the constant and ruinous strain to which his nerves had been subjected."

This was what Richard read, and what begot his instant resolution of presenting a repetition of his liberty. The young man made his bow, and extended his hand saying: "Proud to make your acquaintance, Mr. Velder."

How vividly this gesture brought up to Richard's mind his interview with Cheatham, Sr. Here, as there, he contented himself with a slight inclination of his head, forcing the other to drop his hand. The fellow, however, was evidently possessed of too much self-esteem, to be embarressed. Imitating the examples of Maxwell and Richard, he took a chair and said insinuatingly: "We are hardly strangers, Mr. Velder, for the governor has bought your patent, you know. To hear him talk one would hardly know whom he considered more perfect, the inventor or the invention. So you see you must blame *him* for my wish to make your acquaintance."

Richard contented himself with a cold: "Don't mention it," and then engaged Maxwell in conversation. The subject of their remarks was either above Mr. Cheatham's horizon, or uncongenial to his taste, for he arose after the expiration of a few minutes and loitered about the room, gazing at the pictures or examining the nick nacks Mrs. Kean had purchased on various occasions as ornaments for their future home in Occidentia.

During these meanderings he had reached the mantlepiece, when suddenly an ejaculation of surprise escaped his

lips, so loud as to attract the attention of the others. No sooner had this cry escaped the lips of the visitor when he struggled for self-possession and said with a forced smile in answer to an inquiring look of Richard: "Excuse me for this lack of manners. I was, I saw, I mean this is a face of uncommon beauty. May I ask whether it is that of Mrs. Velder?"

Richard rose and went to the mantlepiece where he discovered an exquisite photograph of Elinor, which Mrs. Kean had secured in one of the best galleries of Paris.

"I am not married," he replied coldly, "this is the picture of a near relative."

"And—and is she in Paris at present?"

"She is out riding with my aunt."

After these words Richard returned to Mr. Maxwell and resumed the subject of their conversation. Mr. Cheatham, on his part, continued his researches just a minute longer probably to avoid too great an abruptness. Then he wheeled suddenly like a man who is struck by a sudden recollection, and exclaimed:"

"By Jove, that reminds me of a rendezvous I arranged with some chums this morning, for the purpose of having our phiz taken. If I do not hasten I shall be late; so please excuse me gentlemen for saying a hasty Au revoir."

A few polite bows and he was gone. Maxwell gazed after him, then looked into his host's countenance and said: "I fear you will blame me for bringing with me this fop. I did not like him myself, but believe me, he stuck to me so pertinaciously that I could not shake him off without rudeness."

Richard begged him not to mind it and expressed his opinion that Mr. Cheatham would hardly bother him with any further attention.

"I am of the same opinion" Maxwell remarked with a smile. "You were cool enough to freeze cream. But I must see the picture which staggered a fellow so "blase" as this Cheatham."

He walked to the mantlepiece and was evidently struck with Elinor's great beauty." "She *is* charming, and no mis-

take" he said warmly. "And the owner is really a relative?"

Richard merely bowed in affirmation, a reserve which warned the other to refrain from the pursuit of the subject. After a few minutes he also said adieu, leaving Richard to his thoughts.

CHAPTER VIII.

A SHIFTING OF SCENES.

Again our friends are on the water, but this time it is fresh, not salty, being in fact the beautiful sheet of the Lake of Constance, through which the Rhine rolls its waves after its fall at Schaffhausen. It is the first of October, and the landscape shows all the charms which Switzerland enjoys in autumn. The air is balmy and imbued with that freshness which the neighboring Alps impart. The Velders are coming up the Rhine, with the intention of catching a glance of Switzerland, before proceeding to Vienna, where they mean to tarry a few months. It is in the morning. They have left the City of Constance, famous through the martyrdom of John Huss, who was burned there at the stake, for heresy, paying the penalty of trusting too implicitly the promises of Sigismund. They were seated on the deck, now chatting gaily about the picturesque landscape, and then feasting their eyes on its ever varying and never tiring charms. Suddenly they heard a cry, and looking in the direction whence it came, saw a woman falling overboard. They afterwards discovered that a portion of the railing, against which she had been leaning, had given away, thus precipitating her into the lake. These steamers are often old, and the corporations owning them are no better than those of other parts, all of them possessing the peculiarity of caring more for their pockets than for the welfare of the public. Immediately after a second plunge was heard, followed shortly by a third one, which latter was made by our friend Richard. He had sprung to his feet, when he heard the first cry, and hastened to the broken railing just in time

to see the second party reach the water. It was a man, and for a moment Richard entertained the idea that he had jumped overboard to rescue the woman; but the splutter he made in rising to the surface at once convinced our friend that he was not only not in a condition to aid the woman, but in danger of drowning himself. Richard's presence of mind stood him in great need, for a glance sufficed to show him that no time must be lost if the lives of these two persons were to be preserved. To strip off his coat and shoes was the work of a second. Next he seized one of the life preservers scattered over the deck, and with it in hand sprang overboard. The steamer was slacking speed, and as he had run to the stern before making the leap he soon reached the spluttering fellow, who used his arms vigorously, with sufficient force to retard his sinking. "Take this," Richard cried to him, and then struck out for the spot where he had seen the woman a few seconds before. She appeared about fifty feet away when he saw her, and never before had he used more vigorously both the great strength of his sinewy limbs and the skill and experience he had acquired. He did not stop to gaze around, but when he at last reached the place where, in his opinion, she ought to be, he saw nothing but the smooth mirror of the lake. Was he too late after all? Had she sunk, never to return? He hesitated to dive, fearing that she might rise during his absence, when he noticed a series of bubbles rising to the surface, followed soon after by a dark object. The next moment he recognized a human body and at once prepared to receive it. He knew full well the danger of being drawn into the grasp of a drowning person, and took his measures accordingly. Seizing a small lath or narrow board swimming within reach, he grasped the hair of the woman with one hand, and shoving the board under it for a support, endeavored to raise and keep it over water. In this he was successful. She was unconscious, but while this circumstance increased the weight he had to sustain, it also freed him from the danger of being drawn into her deadly embrace. It is doubtful whether he could have endured the enormous strain on his muscles with-

out the aid of the friendly little board which, though only three or four inches wide and barely four feet long, gave his arm the needful support for sustaining the heavy weight of the senseless woman. He had his back to the steamer, and could not, therefore, observe the preparations which they were doubtlessly making to come to the rescue; but hoped they would hurry, and breathed a deep sigh of relief, when he heard the strokes of oars coming in that direction and sounding nearer and nearer. At length they are there; they relieve his aching arm of the burden, and draw first the rescued woman, then him into the boat, where he sinks exhausted upon a bench, and draws a dozen deep breaths to restore the regular respiration, so essential to our comfort. The boat is rapidly rowed to the steamer, and ten minutes later every sign of that catastrophe has disappeared, and the steamer proceeds on her voyage. Richard received the solicitous inquiries of his aunt and also his sister, who showed more animation on this occasion than ever since her sickness, excepting cases directly connected with her tragedy. Richard soon satisfied the ladies that he was all right; then declining all the eager praises and congratulations of the passengers, he retired to his cabin to change his clothes. When he returned to the deck, half an hour later, he found with his friends the couple in whose rescue he had played so conspicuous a part. They also had changed their garments for others, which the kindness of the passengers seemed to have furnished them, and which fitted them so poorly as to give them a rather grotesque appearance. When he drew near, they both rose and thanked him with tears in their eyes and a touching simplicity which at once engaged his sympathy and awakened his interest. They spoke German with a southern accent, and as Richard had been taught this language by his mother and read many standard works in it, he found no difficulty in understanding them and conversing with them. In the course of this conversation he learned that the young man's name was Gottlieb Grad, while the girl called herself Sophie Treu. They had come on board at Constance and were bound for Schaffhausen where Gotlieb

was engaged as a helper in a blacksmith's shop, while Sophie went there with the hope of finding employment in a family as maid of all work. With the simplicity of people of their rank and condition they confided to Richard that they were engaged, but altogether too poor to think of marrying. In fact, the authorities of their native place had refused to grant to them the necessary license, since they were unable to give the bond securing the town against all risks. Richard rapidly formed a liking for both of them, and when the boat landed at Schaffhausen he told Gottlieb and his "Schatz" to call on him at the hotel. In consequence they made their appearance shortly after dinner and were ushered into the presence of our friends. Richard asked them whether they had dined and when he learned that they had only eaten a lunch brought from Constance, he ordered a good dinner for them, which they enjoyed hugely, thanking him over and over again for his kindness.

"There is no occasion at all, my friends," he said almost seriously, "what I have done for you is a mere trifle and it is really I who am obliged for the chance of doing his fellow mortals a kindness. Don't you see?"

"Well," said Gottlieb, "that ain't the view which people generally entertain of such matters."

"So much the worse for the people then. At all events, you would really oblige me by dropping this matter. I begged you to call in order to find out how I can help you, for I have conceived a liking for you and would like to put you in a shape to help yourselves, for mind you, I do not believe in keeping people in a helpless infancy, and feed them with pap."

Gottlieb laughed heartily, and Sophie joined in probably from a sense of duty. Richard resumes:

"Do not misunderstand me friends; what I mean is this: There is too much charity in the world, and too little justice. Charity degrades, and the person whom I support with alms only receives back in driblets, what I stole from him, wholesale."

A queer expression flittered over Gottlieb's face at these words.

He looked cautiously around, as if afraid of some eaves dropper and then said, lowering his voice to a confidential whisper:

"Why, that is just what the socialists say."

Richard started. "Are you a socialist?" he inquired, wonderingly.

"Well, kind of one," was the hesitating reply. "I know you will make no ill use of this confession."

"Of course I shall not," Richard cried cheerily; "but where did you imbibe socialistic principles?"

"In the army, Herr Velder."

"In the army? I thought that was the last place where they would tolerate such innovations."

Gottlieb chuckled as if the idea tickled him. "Of course they don't; but they get there in spite of them. One fellow whispers them to his chum, and that chum to another, and so they are discussed and accepted. Indeed, Mr. Velder, were it not for fear of betrayal and certain death, in case of discovery, the whole army would soon be tainted, and—and—"

"Drive their tyrants to Halifax?" suggested Richard.

"Goodness, I didn't say that," Gottlieb replied, casting another glance of precaution around.

"But thought it all the same. Well, Gottlieb, I am sincerely glad to have met you, and if you will let me, I shall make a man of you."

"Of Sophie, too?" Gottlieb inquired with a sly glance.

"Yes, of her too. In fact, if I am not very much mistaken, she will wear the breeches after the knot is tied. Say Gottlieb, now I think of it: What made you jump into the lake, knowing you cannot swim?"

"Well," replied the young man, scratching his head in slight confusion; "I can hardly tell you. I knew her to be in danger and wanted to share it, I suppose."

"You are a good fellow, Gottlieb, and am really glad to have met you, even at the risk of seeing Sophie's new frock

spoiled. Tell me truly: Have you any prospects of ever amounting to anything in your native land?"

Gottlieb studied a moment, then he said: "No, Mr. Velder, I have no such prospect, excepting that of being much cuffed and elbowed."

"How, then, would you like to go with me to Occidentia? There, I can, and will give you the chance of becoming independent, taking that word for what it is worth."

Gottlieb did not reply at once, but looked inquiringly at Sophie, who returned his gaze with interest, smiling encouragingly.

"You like the idea?" he then asked; "You would go with with me, and leave kin and kith behind?"

"How you talk," she said with a pretty pout and blush; "You know very well I have neither kin nor kith."

"Your fatherland, then, Sophie?"

"My fatherland is where you are, Gottlieb; that settles it."

"Herr Velder, here is my hand and word."

"All right, I am glad you come to that conclusion, partly on my account, but chiefly on your's and Sophie's. And now listen to me, Gottlieb. After the expiration of six months I shall return to Occidentia, to begin a great and glorious work, mapped out formerly by a dying mother. This work is the betterment of the masses, a thorough reformation of the social system, in a word, a rejuvenation of the human race. Do you follow me, Gottlieb?"

"Fully and entirely," replied the fellow, whose eyes had caught a vivid reflection of the fire lighting up Richard's."

"Very well. I have been so fortunate as to secure many millions to aid me in that work, knowing full well that without such auxillaries the task would be utterly hopeless. Even with such backing, however, the undertaking is not merely difficult, but perilous, and if you follow me, and aid me, you must expect to attract many of the missles discharged at me. It is but fair that I should point out these dangers to you, to guard against reproaches and the accusation of having con-

ducted you from the rain to the eaves. Remember that Sophie, as your wife, will share these perils, and that you are therefore responsible for any misfortune which may befall her in consequence of having embraced my cause, that is, the cause of your brethren. Do you still follow?"

"Go on," said Gottlieb, huskily.

"Very well. I told you that I have become rich, very rich; but understand, that I consider myself merely the stewart for these millions, and that they will be spent to the last cent in behalf of and for the benefit of the masses. So while I can with reasonable certainty promise you a fair competence, I am not at liberty to give or promise to you any considerable portion of my wealth. Do you comprehend?"

Gottlieb only nodded, and Richard proceeded:

"I hardly understand how and why I talk to you in this manner and communicate to an utter stranger things which I never before breathed to any mortal outside of my family. Something tells me I can trust you, and what is more, that you understand me and appreciate the disinterestness of my motives, and the grandeur of my plans. Nay, do not reply at once. Go home and ponder upon my words in all their bearings. Consult with Sophie and when you have made up your minds, either one way or another, come and inform me of your decision. I shall remain here until to-morrow, if not longer. For the present farewell."

He held out both his hands to these simple people, and while Gottlieb wrung the one extended to him with an almost painful fervor, Sophie kissed the other, dropping upon it something very much like a tear. Then they both said "ade" retiring with the promise of an early return.

"After dinner Richard engaged a sail boat and skimmed the lake in company with his aunt and Elinor and to the immense delight of George, who kept the company in constant glee and excitement, causing so late a return in consequence of his repeated prayers that the shades of evening began to fall when they reached the hotel. Supper was in waiting, and when it in turn was finished, Gottlieb and Sophie sent in word

that they wished to see Herr Velder. When Richard appeared before them in the parlor they both arose, and Gottlieb said: "Mr. Velder, we have thought over all you have said. It is true your work has its difficulties and its dangers, but what is good enough for you, is good enough for us. We are yours with all our heart."

"But, my friends, I can hardly accept such a sacrifice in my own name and for my own person."

"Well accept it then in the name of our suffering brethren."

"Ah, that is another thing. In their name I thank you for this offering, and in their name I accept your services. But sit down as I have a few more words to say to you."

When they were seated he continued. "I told you before that you are the only strangers to whom I have ever confided my intentions. I need not add that the utmost secrecy on your part is necessary. They say women are talkative, but I denounce this accusation as a vile slander, and am confident that Sophie will justify the confidence I place in her."

"And you are right, Herr Velder. Sophie is not of the tattling kind, she aint."

"I knew it, but let me proceed. I shall remain in Europe for about six more months, and visit Vienna and Berlin during that period. I want you, or at least Gottlieb to prepare yourselves for the work in store, and it is therefore fair that I should furnish you the means of support. What do you think of the propriety of having the knot tied at once and then accompanying us on our journey?"

A vivid blush mantled Sophie's cheeks at these words, while Gottlieb's eyes sparkled so significently that he really need not have said: "I am agreed."

"Well, silence implies consent" said Richard with a smile.

"Wait here a moment until I bring in my ladies and acquaint them with the programme."

He left the room, and returned shortly with Mr. Kean and Elinor; George forming the rear. Mrs. Kean was great-

ly surprised at her nephew's disclosures, but only told the truth in saying that she was delighted with the arrangement, for she had learned to like both of these simple mannered and simple hearted people. Even Elinor gave strong signs of approbation evoked perhaps by the prospective marriage of the young couple. After due consultation it was decided that the marriage should take place in the hotel on the following morning, the landlord volunteering to furnish the minister. Gottlieb insinuated that a justice of the peace would be good enough for him, but Sophie though slightly infected with socialism, was too conservative to sanction such informality. The landlord good naturedly secured the consent of the local magistrate who raised no difficulties when he learned the intention of the couple to emigrate at an early date, and so the ceremony was really and solemnly performed on the following morning. An hour later our friends once more embarked on board the steamer; this time bound for Freiburg, and accompanied by Gottlieb and Sophie, who were radiant with happiness, but wore their new condition much like new clothes, whose seams are a little stiff yet. During the trip Richard conversed a good deal with Gottlieb, whom he found not only well informed for one of his rank, but also possessed of more than ordinary intelligence.

Again we must forbear to dog the steps of our friends. They tarried a few days in Switzerland, and then proceeded to Vienna, where they once more took permanent lodgings. Wherever the opportunity offered, Richard played the part of teacher to his grown pupil, and though Gottlieb's success can hardly be said to have equaled his own, he did fairly well. He took his first swimming lessons in the lakes of Switzerland, and on their arrival, Gottlieb's military service had made his body pliant, and after a few months, he began to swim with both skill and endurance. In fencing he was less successful. He had learned to handle the broad sword, and told Richard with a grin that he felt able to describe very handsome designs with it on an opponent's face; but the foil was rather too childish for him, an idea, he did not relinquish, un-

til Richard showed him how easily a skillful fencer can send a person to the happy hunting grounds in that manner. Nor was Gottlieb very successful in boxing. He liked to close with his adversary, he said, claiming that after that the other would have little chance for putting in his thrusts. Richard showed him the fallacy of such thoughts, showing him in a friendly sparring match, how utterly hopeless are the endeavors to close with a skillful boxer. Richard defied him to close with him on that occasion, and so severe was the lesson Gottlieb received that he acknowledged his mistake, and from that moment showed much more readiness to learn an art, which had been brought home with numerous blows, softened by the gloves, but sufficiently hard to convince him. He had learned to ride in the army; so the companions made numerous excursions on horseback, always combining business with pleasure, and carrying out some feature of Richard's programme. After a sojourn of three months they broke up quarters and proceeded to Berlin, which city Richard found to be not only the political, but also intellectual center of Europe. He attended lectures, and interviewed the leading socialists of Germany, who had taken up their abode there, as if bound to engage in a desperate fight with a military despotism. Here he continued and finished his study of the German language, which he had always preferred to the French, on account of its greater depth, richness, pathos and adaptation to poetry. Bound up in plans of reform though he was, Richard was passionately fond of poetry, and feasted eagerly on the many great works of poetic character left to the Teutonic nation by bards. A few weeks before his final departure for Occidentia, he called upon an artificer in iron and asked him whether he could make for him a coat of mail impervious to bullets, and sufficiently pliant to be worn under one's clothes. The mechanic replied in the affirmative and showed him several garments of that character. Richard objected to all of them and then pointed out to the artificer a mode of joining the small plates both strong and flexible.

"That's all very well," remarked the man shrugging his

shoulders; "but who would pay me for such a coat of mail? I could not furnish it under five hundred thalers."

"I will pay you for one," remarked Richard, "provided you do the work to suit me. Here are two hundred thalers as earnest money."

The man's face brightened. "That's what I call business, and I am glad of having an opportunity to show you what I can do."

He went to work without delay, and five weeks later Richard received a coat of mail so strong in character, and yet so flexible that no trace of it was noticeable through his clothes. He paid the artisan and put his coat in his trunk, uncertain whether he would ever use it, but feeling confident that his designs would frequently expose him to the bullet and dagger of the assassin, directed now by the promise of gold, and now by the ignorance or infatuation of the very men for whom he proposed to toil. Richard was fearless to a fault, and, under ordinary circumstances, would have scorned the idea of such protection; but he also knew that one ounce of lead from an ambush would stop not only his existence—a matter of small moment in his own estimation, but also the execution of a reform aiming at the reconstruction of society. It was, therefore, more with the view of protecting his cherished scheme, than his life, that he procured the coat mentioned. On the twenty-fifth of March, *i. e.*, exactly one year since his departure from Plutopolis, our friends, accompanied by their proteges, embarked on the steamer Lohengrin from a North German port, to return to Plutopolis. Let us hasten to anticipate them, to watch with befitting interest the first steps of our young hero in his new career.

CHAPTER IX.

OPENING OF THE CAMPAIGN.

They were nearing the port of Plutopolis. The sky was blue, the sea smooth, and the air redolent with the smell of spring. Our friend sat on the deck, Elinor a little apart from the rest, and playing with George, now a sturdy lad of three and half, and more attractive than ever. Elinor herself had changed a good deal. She had become stouter and looked more womanly than before. Indeed, but few would have recognized in her the girl of eighteen, who made a sensation wherever she showed herself. Not that she was less handsome, but the vacancy of her gaze marred her appearance, much as the stuffing of the antelope mars her grace and animation. Her hair also had darkened several shades, including her eye-brows, causing Richard to remark to his aunt: "Aunt Laura, don't you think Elinor has changed a good deal?"

"Indeed she has, Richard. I am sure people that knew her before your parents' death, would hardly recognize her."

"That's what I think, and I must say, that this circumstance comes mighty handy. I wish, I too, had changed so as to become unrecognizable."

"My, Dick, you *have* changed, and a good deal, too. You sport a fine beard and mustache now, you know, and I doubt whether your old school-mates would recognize you."

"Perhaps they wouldn't, aunty, but you see I shall be seen as Richard Velder, on landing, so my change will do no good. The fact is, Richard Velder will have to disappear for a while."

His aunt looked at him so inquiringly, that he continued:

"You remember mother's warning, not to let the people become aware of my wealth. This warning is based on excellent good sense like all her other suggestions, and I shall act upon it. I shall buy some property in a quiet part of the city, install you and Elinor in it, and then disappear, after having made beforehand all needful preparations."

"You will not leave us, Dick?"

"As Richard Velder? Yes, ma'm; but I shall live near you, and often see you as John Smith, Tom Brown, or some other ordinary fellow."

"Dick, Dick! Are you not afraid of getting into trouble?"

"Not much, Aunt Laura. You see, I am a millionaire, and much is pardoned to millionaires which would send paupers to the State prison. If I am found out, what of it? It is only the freak of a young fellow who has nothing to do and must contrive something to while away his time."

"Well, I trust sincerely you may be right; but I do not see how you are going to accomplish all this without the help of others."

"Haven't I Gottlieb and his Sophie? I knew I would need assistance and therefore brought them along. I cannot tell you now how I shall manage, but it must and will be managed in some way, Aunty dear; depend upon it I have studied long and deep on the subject, but must eventually trust to circumstances and the inspiration of the moment."

Early the next morning the noble steamer entered the fair bay and harbor of Plutopolis. Richard engaged a carriage and directed the driver to take him to respectable, but very quiet hotel in the upper city. Here he engaged rooms, and rested for the day. The next morning he went to the banks, drew the interest of the million which had not been touched, and deposited the sums he had realized from the sale of his patent in Europe. Next he drove around to inspect various properties which were offered for sale. After a careful investigation he finally selected one, which lay in a retired portion of the city, and bordered on two streets, one of which was quite fashionable, while the other skirted a modest quarter inhabited by poor people. There was a stately house on the former and a modest little cottage on the latter. A continued yard ran from one to the other with a narrow alley in the middle, used to remove the garbage of the householders. Richard at once went to the agent, paid down the entire sum, and requested him to make out the deed without delay. By

this time his presence in the city had become known, and the evening papers contained a long notice to the effect that the celebrated inventor of the new telephone had returned from Europe, with the intention of taking up his abode in Plutopolis, for which purpose he had already purchased a house. Richard had expected nothing else, nor did he care, for he had learned long ago, that the virtue of owning millions cannot well be hid under a bushel. He smiled grimly when he read about his intentions, saying half loud, and with a touch of sarcasm: "Ye fools; much indeed do you know of Richard Velder's intentions. You are surely welcome to your cunning deductions."

When he had completed this transaction he took Gottlieb to the premises which were vacant, led him into the cellar of the mansion and said:

"Now, Gottlieb, I want the cellar of these two houses to be connected by a narrow passage; but the workmen must not know what they are doing. Have the front passage excavated to this side of the alley, and then the rear passage to the far side. Do you understand me?"

"Certainly, Herr Velder. How wide is the passage to be?"

"Oh, say three feet. Tell the workmen it is intended to store the wine, and observe no secrecy to avoid suspicion. I think you can find some countrymen of yours, who have recently come to this country and are ignorant of the language."

"I think, I could; but the passage will have to be arched as we proceed."

"Certainly. I give you carte blanche for everything connected with the work."

"All right, Herr Velder, I shall try to secure your approbation; but what about the ends: are they to be walled up?"

"No, Gottlieb, for I intend uniting the passages under the alley."

"That's what I thought, sir. We must invent some pretext for this odd proceeding."

"Invent something plausible, Gottlieb."

"But the ground that's excavated; where can we take it?"

"I will ascertain. I shall be absent for several days, and you will oblige me by using all dispatch in this matter, as I wish to have both houses ready for use."

"And the little one, Herr Velder?"

"Will be yours and Sophie's."

"That's what I thought, sir. You see I can see through a board when there is a hole in it."

"Well, I know you are quite clever, Gottlieb. Now go, get the necessary workmen and report this evening at the hotel. Do not forget the estimate of the cost."

With this he left to take his northern line of steam cars to the open country just beyond the suburbs. There he ascended a slight knoll, which allowed a view over the neighborhood. What he saw, was this: There were hardly any houses on the north and east for the distance of a mile, simply for the reason that a tributary of Crab River ran through low ground, swamping the neighborhood to its mouth. This tributary meandered through the land in true snake fashion, describing curves fully three miles long over a distance of hardly a third that long. The tributary wound around the base of the knoll, and Richard saw that a cut of about three hundred yards through this knoll, would not only straighten the course of the creek, but take it to higher and more favorable ground. True, it would require much labor and more money to correct the bed from there to its mouths, but it could be done, and such correction would undoubtedly reclaim a large piece of valuable ground, which, when laid dry, would at once be sought for homes of people working in Plutopolis. Richard's attention had been drawn to this swamp by its owner, who lived in Paris, and was desirous of disposing of property which yielded no income, and cost a considerable sum in the shape of taxes."

"I suppose I could reclaim the land" he had said to Richard; "but the fact is, I lack the ready cash and am too fond of ease and tranquility to go over there and superintend the work. You are young and active, have the needful means and could surely double your money if you purchased the tract."

"Well, how much is there of it, and how much an acre do you want?"

"Just a thousand acres, and if you wish to purchase them you can have them at $200 an acre."

"That is for $200,000?"

"Exactly: $200,000 cash, mind."

"Will you give me the refusal until I can examine the place?"

"How long will that be?"

"I intend starting for home in a few weeks. I will engage to decide within three months."

The owner had accepted this proposal and as the three months were nearly over, Richard had used his first spare day to investigate the place. We know him to be above greedy and selfish speculations, but he had forseen that the day was near at hand when he would need both work and homes for his proteges, and if this swamp was really redeemable, he could surely find no spot more suitable for his purpose. He did not pretend to have any experience in such matters, but he felt pretty sure that labor and money could easily reclaim the land, and at a cost quite moderate in proportion to its value. The owner had given him the address of his agent and no sooner had our friend returned to the city than he hunted up his man. He found him in his office, and when Richard had told him the nature of his errand he replied: "You are doing a deucedly clever thing, Mr. Velder. In fact, if I could rake up the money I would buy myself; but you see it's to be all cash, and that's what keeps us small fry from taking the bait—well, I will write at once, and—"

"Telegraph, sir, if you please; I'll foot the bill."

"All right, just as you say. The submarine cable office

is only a few doors from here, and if you wish it, we may go there without delay."

They went accordingly, and three hours later the agent held in his possession a return message, authorizing him to accept $200,000 cash for the tract, and to use the power of attorney in his hands to make out and sign the deed of transfer. So when Richard called the next morning he found everything ready, and on payment of a check for the stipulated sum, was handed the document making him the owner of a swamp of one thousand acres. We must not forget that Gottlieb had reported the evening before to the effect that he had engaged the men, carts and horses necessary to excavate the soil, remove it, and construct the arched passage."

"And when will they begin?"

"To-morrow morning, Herr Richard. They are all of them Germans. Indeed, the ward back of the house swarms with them."

"That's well, for we may need them again in the future, and we may recruit our members largely from them."

"I *know* we can, for every second one of them is a confirmed socialist."

Gottlieb proved himself a very efficient superintendent, for when Richard returned from a week's journey, he found the work completed, and the houses ready for occupancy. With the assistance of his aunt, Richard purchased the needful furniture for both houses, besides the thousand and one articles absolutely necessary for our complicated wants. The cottage in the back street had a little store-room, a circumstance inspiring Richard with the idea of opening a little grocery in the same, and installing Gottlieb and Sophie as presiding geniuses. True, they knew but little of the language of the country, but they were apt scholars, especially Sophie, and then, it does not take a big vocabulary to sell a pound of coffee, or a peck of potatoes. Besides, according to Gottlieb's statement, the ward back of the property was full of Germans, and these would naturally wish to patronize their countryman, provided, of course, he kept prime groceries, and

sold as cheap as anybody else. We need hardly to say that it was not the prospect of gain which influenced Richard in the establishment of the grocery, but the idea of constant concourse of the people there. A grocery as a barometer, indicating with unfailing certainity the condition of the masses, their notions, hopes, wishes and aspirations. Next Gottlieb was bidden to secure the needful help for a thorough cleaning of the buildings, and then the two families moved in. It need hardly be intimated, that no sign whatever indicated any intimacy between the grocer and his wife, and the aristocratic occupants of the front mansion, as the knowledge of such relations or connection would have endangered if not frustrated Richard's designs. Next he and Gottlieb completed the passage under the alley. Gottlieb had provided for enough bricks and mortar, allowing a rapid and steady construction of the arched way. The earth was removed to the cellar, and afterwards carted away. In the middle of the new tunnel, an iron door was placed, moving horizontally on a central bar, which, in turn, was fastened in the wall above, and in a solid support below. The door fitted tight in the aperture, and when it had been painted in imitation of brick work, no unsuspecting person could have distinguished it from real masonry in the darkness. Richard stocked the new grocery most liberally, selecting the goods in accordance with the class of customers likely to patronize the establishment. Both Gottlieb and Sophie took great interest and pride in the concern, and soon reported such marked improvements in their trade that the success of the enterprise was assured.

Now a few words regarding Richard's journey. We have already intimated that he had thought long and deeply on the subject uppermost in his mind and heart. These thoughts has led to the purchase of the swampy tract; they now caused the purchase of very extensive tracts of farming land in Plutonia, the State to which Plutopolis belongs, and in half a dozen other States, some north, some south, all of them adapted to colonization. As yet the colonists were wanting; but Richard forsaw that he would soon have more than he could

accommodate. He spent several millions in these purchases, and when the people heard of them they nodded knowingly, called him a sly dog, and predicted that they would prove paying investments.

When he returned from this trip he shut himself up in his room, and for a week or two paid little heed to anything without. At the end of this seclusion, he called his aunt into the room and said:

"Here, Aunt Laura, is another gold spring for our coffers."

"What! you greedy boy, are you insensible? Have you not already more than you can use?"

"Far from it, aunty. Let me once begin operations and you will see our cash wilt and vanish as the dry grass vanishes before a fire."

"And do you expect this to pay as well as your telephone?"

"No Aunt Laura. You see a phonograph is not in such general demand."

"A phonograph: What is a phonograph?"

"An instrument which records a person's sayings, and afterwards reproduces them on turning a crank."

"You are making sport of me Richard."

"How would I dare, Aunt Laura? No, no, this is no new thing, as phonographs have been invented long since. Only mine is as far above the old ones as my telephone above its rivals."

"I do not conceive how this is possible."

"Let me show you then. Watch, I move this bolt and now proceed to read to you Hamlet's instructions to the actors. Listen:

He opened a small volume and read aloud and with becoming emphasis the famous piece in question. When he had done he moved another bolt, and then to his relative's utter amazement, not to say consternation, the machine repeated the piece, not only loud and distinctly, but in Richard's voice and with the emphasis he had given the words. When all

was over, Mrs. Kean drew a deep and long breath, saying with an agitation quite unusual to her: "Well this beats me. I am sure, two hundred years ago the inventor of such a machine would have been in danger of an autodafe."

"No doubt of it, Aunt Laura. Now, however, they will be used to ferret out the iniquity of scoundrels and traitors."

"Well, I won't ask any more questions, Richard, for I am getting into deep water. And will you sell this machine to the same party?"

"I promised him the refusal, you know. You cannot imagine what satisfaction I derive from the thought, that the same agency which ruined my parents, furnishes me the means to combat his power."

"But does he not make more money out of the purchase of your inventions?"

"He does. Perhaps my sentiments on this point are childish, but we all ride our hobby, you know, and so you must indulge me in mounting mine."

That very afternoon Richard dropped a letter to Senator Cheatham, informing him of the completion of his phonograph, and the securement of a caveat for the same. He informed him that he would exhibit the machine in Mr. Phelps's office on the following morning, stating at the same time that he would accept one million dollars for the absolute sale of the invention. At nine o'clock he drove to the bureau, where he had served so eventful a term, Mr. Phelps received him with open arms, and gazed curiously at the machine which Richard carried under his arm, and deposited carefully on the table. He was on the point of asking many questions, when the door opened, admitting no less a person than the great statesman and financier. This time Richard stood on the opposite side of the table, but whether it was this circumstance or a recollection of his former experience, the statesman contended himself with a gracious nod of his head, and a very affable: "A very good morning to you, Mr. Velder." After shaking hands with Mr. Phelps and taking a chair the Senator resumed: "I received your letter, and hastened to obey your summons.

It is but fair to inform you that the purchase of your telephone has been such an extraordinary good venture, that I, or rather our syndicate is favorably inclined to make a second deal with you. What have you to offer this time?"

Instead of making a reply, Richard shoved his bolt as he had done in showing the working of the machine to his aunt, and then handing Mr. Phelps a newspaper, said to that gentleman: "Please read the editorial of this paper." Mr. Phelps evidently did not know what to make of such a request, but an encouraging nod on the part of the Senator reassured him, and he began to read in a tolerably impressive manner, the utter condemnation of the policy advocated by the Senator's party. This amused Richard and even over the Senator's face passed a broad grin, showing that he was not dead to the humor of the incident. The manager, on the other hand, winced under the scathing remarks, and benefitted by the end of the first paragraph to bring his elocutionary exercise to an end. When he had done Richard reversed the bolt, saying merely "Listen."

And then arose from the box, in accents loud and distinct, Mr. Phelps' voice, causing not only that gentleman, but even the Senator, to rise from his chair, and listen with amazement, hardly less intense than that of Mrs. Kean on the afternoon before.

"Well, this beats all," cried Mr. Phelps, after his "alter ego" had stopped wiping from his forehead the large drops of perspiration which had gathered there in profusion.

"It *is* wonderful," seconded the Senator. "Mr. Velder, I know you to be a man of few words, so I will simply say, I accept your offer and your terms, even without reporting to our friends. How soon will your patent be ready?"

"As soon as the formalities of the law permits. I shall take this model to Patropolis to-morrow."

"I shall also depart for that city in a day or two and use my influence to push the matter. Ah, you are going to leave us? Adieu, then, do not forget that this invention is mine."

There is no necessity to follow up the details of this tran-

saction. It will suffice to state that in less than four months, Richard's bank account had increased another round million. A few days after the interview described above Richard sat in consultation with his aunt, saying:

"Aunty dear, I'll have to burden you with the general supervision of my affairs during my absence. You may fix your own salary. May I venture to assume that this concession is sufficiently tempting to make you accede to my wishes?"

"This concession has no force at all Dick. Foolish boy, don't you see that your liberality has reduced its value with me to absolute zero?"

"Ah, is that it? Well, what other wishes must I pull then."

"The heart strings my dear boy. Did you actually think I could refuse you anything?"

"Not even a kiss, aunty."

"Here are two, you silly boy. Well I will try to manage your affairs, but must positively refuse to keep your books."

"Ah?"

"Yes, but I will suggest an outlet from this dilemma."

"Do you remember my brother-in-law, Clarence Simpson?"

"The one we used to call Uncle Calculus?"

"Yes, you naughty boy. It was too bad, but I must confess there never was a nickname more properly applied, for Brother Clarence is really but a living example. While other people live on steak, gruel and other substantials he seems to feed upon nothing but numbers. You know he is a clerk in a bank of Patropolis, and one should think that an eight hours stay there would satisfy him. This, however, is not the case, for no sooner has he come home and crammed a hasty supper, than he sits down and begins to work some of the greatest difficulties with numbers rising to billions and trillions. You know he is a batchelor. I honestly believe that he only remained single to indulge freely this strange fascination of numbers."

"Well, he is an oddity to be sure. But what has he to do with this matter?"

"Well if you hold out to him the prospects of calculations he could scarcely resist the temptations, and in him you would not merely secure a fellow as honest as honesty itself, but an expert who could keep your accounts so lucidly that a little child could see through them."

Richard thought this suggestion an excellent one. So he wrote to Uncle Calculus, offered him the situation of book-keeper, cashier, and teller all in one, with the prospects of endless ciphering and a salary considerably higher than that which he enjoyed in his present position. This letter had the desired effect. Uncle Calculus accepted Richard's offer and informed him that he might expect him in a week, and at the end of that period Uncle Calculus really put in his appearance. A room in the second story had been prepared for him, and the front room of the basement for a cosy and convenient office. Richard presented his factotum to the banks, informing them that Mr. Clarence Simpson was authorized to issue checks if countersigned by Mrs. Laura Kean, and then duly installed him in his office, where he was soon heels over head engaged in catering to his passion for numbers. With Sophie's aid a chambermaid and cook were secured, both hailing from the Fatherland in the first place, and from the ward near the grocery, in the second. They proved good and efficient helpmates, and greatly facilitated Richard's impending metamorphosis, in as far as they relieved his mind as to the proper support in the household duties of his dear ones. He was now frequently closeted with his aunt, to whom he confided his intentions regarding the draining of the swamp and other schemes connected with his land purchases. He took her out to the tract, showed her where the knoll was to be cut and pointed out the bed for the creek from that point to its mouth. "Of course I shall engage a superintendent skilled in such work," but as he will have to report progress to you it is fair that you should know whether he does his duty. I am aware, dear aunty, that I am thus taxing your strength to the utmost

and perhaps in an unpardonable manner; but I need not remind you that you work for mankind, not for me. Moreover, you must totally abstain from working in the house, leaving such trifling and mental tasks to the parties I have engaged. Will you promise?"

"Yes, my dear boy," she replied, touched by his tender solicitude.

"All right, then. I shall execute a power of attorney in your behalf, authorizing you to represent me in every respect, as Richard Velder is going abroad, and will hardly visit Occidentia oftener than twice a year."

"And when does he expect to leave?"

"As soon as he can get a saratoga of the proper size," he replied with a smile. "Now let us go home, as I have lots to do before my departure."

On his way home he said: "Aunt Laura, I have made arrangements with the livery stable across the grocery, to stable and tend these horses. Send for them whenever you need them. There will be many an occasion, when you want to move rapidly, unexposed to the publicity of the street car. In such cases do not hesitate to use the carriage. Moreover Elinor and the boy have to have plenty of drives in the open air, so do not spare the horses, which might suffocate with fat, if standing in their stalls from morning 'till night.

During the next week Richard indulged in work of a motley character calculated to excite the disability of any one uninitiated. He caused Gottlieb to purchase the complete outfit of a wandering scissor grinder, and then ground knives and scissors by the hour, spoiling them by the dozen, to the great chagrin of Sophie, who declared with a mixture of merriment and indignation, that there would soon be a rise in the price of these articles. Richard, however, exhibited his habitual cleverness in this, as in other arts, learning readily to grind edged instruments of all descriptions in a manner truly scientific.

Next he got his factotum to procure soldering irons of all shapes and sizes, together with the most approved sorts of

solder, both hard and soft, to say nothing of boxes of rosin, bottles of muriatic acid, and other substances connected with the high, and to the uninitiated, mysterious art of soldering. Then he demanded the surrender of tin pails, pans, dishes and plates, from the store, to punch holes into them, and then restore them to their primitive intactness. To this, however, Sophie objected, delivering such an impressive sermon on the same of such a waste, that Richard retracted his order with due humility, influenced perhaps by her promise to procure for him all the dilapidated tinware he could possibly manage. She was indeed as good as her word, and soon our friend was surrounded by a wall of pans, dishes and kettles, looking for the world like the rampart of a fortified city. Richard went to work with a will, but found the tin covered with so much grease, that he called Sophie and told her with a mien of protest that he could not solder such greasy tinware. However, if he had expected to see her relent, he was sadly mistaken.

"Why, Herr Velder," she cried in genuine surprise; "you don't expect people to give you their new tinware to mend? All pans and kettles are greasy, and most generally greasier than these. So, unless you can solder these, you might as well give up the idea of soldering old tinware."

This logic was so irrefutable that Richard did not even make the attempt, but set to scraping the greasy edges, or washing them with biting acids, until his fingers were sore or blistered from one end to the other. However neither sores nor blisters had the power of checking his purposes, and after an apprenticeship of several days, Richard succeeding in stopping a leak in a moderately acceptable fashion. When Sophie told him that his repairs were hardly durable he replied with a laugh, that durability was a feature calculated to kill the business, and that she could hardly expect him to bring about starvation by his own efforts.

"There was a third and last branch of business to which Richard meant to devote himself, *i. e.*, the mending of umbrellas. To learn the trade, however, he must procure an abundance of old umbrellas, with the understanding that their

repairs should not provoke as many suits for damages. True, there was a supply of new umbrellas in the store, but, in spite of his undoubted pluck, he had not the courage to propose their destruction for the sake of his own improvement. Here again the good woman came to the rescue. She went among her country folks in the neighboring ward, and traded in so many delapidated umbrellas for small quantities of groceries, as to create a second rampart more formidable than the first. Next the needful pinchers, tongs, gimlets, etc., etc., were secured, together with the material for new covers, new ribs, new handles, and then Richard began his work. Before the end of the first day, he discovered that if telephone and phonograph present points of difficulties, the mending of umbrellas is not without its trials. Now the new cover refused to assume a smooth and creditable surface; next the ribs objected to be twisted into the proper shape, and, at other times, the handles would wiggle waggle in an alarming manner, totally unbecoming to a decent umbrella. When this turn of apprenticeship was over, Richard felt much pride, saying to his aunt: "Aunt Laura, if you want to try a man's mettle, set him to mending umbrellas. If he does not quit at the end of the first hour, consider him a pretty patient individual; and if he perseveres, set him down as a mortal of uncommon endurance."

These preparations had consumed several weeks, and Richard became quite nervous and impatient; yet he knew that one more task had to be performed before he could enter on his real work.

He needed a number of essays on the subject of social reforms, their necessity and the best mode of accomplishing them. These essays must be in the shape of addresses to the people, adapted to their various trades and conditions, clothed in language simple, yet eloquent. Truth is convincing if the ear is willing to receive it, and the mind to ponder upon it; but much depends upon the form in which it is presented. Richard knew that much would depend upon the execution of this task, and therefore went to work with due diligence, and a concentration of his mental faculties on this one point.

He shut himself up in his room, working from early dawn to dusk at night with such unwearied assiduity as to fill Mrs. Kean with the fear of seeing him break down under this strain of brain work. Richard laughed at such an apprehension, assuring her that this work was child's play in comparison with the tension to which his mind had been subject to for weeks and months, when engaged with his inventions. At last the work was done and on that evening he informed his aunt and sister that he intended leaving them on the following morning, and that his absence would probably last several months. This declaration was intended for Elinor, and the servants as well as Uncle Calculus, who though highly honorable and trustworthy, was so absorbed in his figures as to become forgetful in matters not connected with his work and liable to betray unintentionally secrets entrusted to his keeping. Mrs. Kean knew where Richard was going and that she would probably see him every day, yet her heart was rather heavy when he left them that evening, and she kissed him with the fervor of a mother who sees a darling child embark on the treacherous waves of an uncertain sea.

CHAPTER X.

DICK BROWN THE TINKER.

"Please, ma'am, there is a fellow in the yard as wants to know whether you have any knives or scissors to grind?"

These words were addressed to Mrs. Kean by her new maid on the following morning. Mrs. Kean had expected some announcement of that kind; so she said: "Yes Anna, I have a pair of scissors which I would like to have sharpened. In the yard, did you say?"

The girl nodded and left the room, followed by her mistress, who on reaching the yard, found a young fellow standing there ready for business. He wore corduroy pants of ample dimensions, disappearing below in a pair of top boots.

A long jacket of the same material reached a few inches below his hips, and on his head he wore a broad-brimmed slouched hat of doubtful age. His hair and beard were of a deep brown giving him a southern appearance, strengthened by his bronze skin which seemed to have been long and recklessly exposed to the sun of Italy or Spain. The fellow looked indeed like a foreigner, and when he said, "Good morning Madam;" his accent also pointed to a foreign birth. Mrs. Kean watched first the man, and then the two domestics who examined him with curious but unsuspicious looks, assuring Mrs. Kean that they failed to recognize in the tinker the young master who had left the house the evening before. Mrs. Kean felt relieved. The disguise was efficient, for if inmates of the house failed to discover it, strangers would not be likely to see through it. She handed the fellow a pair of scissors, saying: "When they are done come into my room; I have an umbrella which needs mending."

"All right" replied the tinker, and set to work, while Mrs. Kean returned to the house. When the scissors were sharpened the tinker addressed the cook saying: "Please ma'am where is the lady's room?" He was shown up stairs pretending the ignorance of a total stranger. A minute later he stood in the presence of his aunt, who closed the door cautiously and said in a low tone: "Well, I must say you managed this pretty cleverly. How did you color your hair and skin? Will the dye not be injurious to your health?"

"No, aunty dear, it is nothing but a decoction of some harmless herbs which will yield to soap and water. Besides exposure to the sun will soon tan my skin sufficiently to make bronzing it superfluous. But I must leave you, as I have many things of moment to attend to. I called principally for the purpose of arranging daily interviews with you. At what hour could they be effected with the least danger of interruption or discovery?"

"I have thought of this and come to the conclusion that the hour of nine in the evening would be most suitable. At

that time the servants have retired to the attic and Elinor and George to their bed room."

"I shall go to the office every night at nine and stay fifteen minutes. If you have not come by that time I shall assume that you have been detained and retire. How does that strike you?"

"It is excellent. I can reach the office from the basement and thus avoid the risk of meeting the girls."

"Au revoir, 'till this evening."

He nodded and left the room. In the yard he shouldered his grinding apparatus and then entered the street where he hailed a horse car and was taken to the business portion of the city. Here he alighted and walked leisurely along a street devoted to industrial pursuits of various kinds, until he discovered a sign showing that printing of all kinds was done inside. He walked in and noticing a glass door at the side, opened it. Before he had crossed the threshhold, a rough voice inside exclaimed curtly: "We have nothing to do for you; get out."

The tinker paid no attention to this summons, but continued his advance, and deposited his machine with the utmost "sang froid" on the floor. The act evidently provoked the owner of the gruff voice, for he cried with increased sharpness: "Didn't I tell you that we have no work for you."

"But I have work for you, sir," was the cool rejoinder, "that is if you see proper to do it."

"Work? What kind of work? We don't do anything in your line."

Richard felt slightly provoked at this bluffness, but remembering that he had turned into a poor tinker, *i. e.*, a fellow not entitled to courtesy and consideration, on the part of the upper crust, he suppressed his vexation and said with his former coolness: "It is printing I want done, and, to judge by the sign outside, this is the proper place."

"Ah, it is printing you want done?" the party in the office exclaimed. "Hand bills, or circular, I suppose?"

"You suppose wrongly, then, sir, for it is a number of

speeches, essays, they call them, I think, which I want printed. They tell me you fellows can cast them in solid sheets, or blocks, and if it don't come too high, I should like to have them done up in that style."

"Stereotyped, you mean, I reckon?" asked the clerk, smelling a bigger job than he had at first anticipated, and increasing his civility accordingly.

"That's it, sir. I can't remember the blasted word."

"Well, let me see your manuscript, to enable me to make an estimate of the cost."

The tinker fumbled in his pockets; then drew forth a bundle of sheets, and said, handing them to the clerk: "Here they be, sir. Take good care of them, for that's the only copy, and I wouldn't wish to lose them for a good deal."

The clerk took the papers and cast a hasty glance over the contents. He saw at once that they were penned by a person of culture, but of exceedingly radical views. So he said rather patronizingly, and with a touch of paternal solicitude: "Who wrote these papers, my friend?"

"A particular friend of mine. That's nothing to do with the—the stereotyping, has it?"

"Not exactly," replied the other, wincing slightly under this rebuke. "I merely asked, because these ideas are rather radical, and may get you into trouble."

"Is that so? Well, hand them back, then. I wouldn't for the world get you into a scrape."

The clerk, however, held on to them, saying with a "hm!" and a slight cough: "Oh, it isn't as bad as all that. We will run no risk in printing them, and as to their distribution, that is your look out."

"Well, tote up the figures, then. Time is precious, and I have to earn my dinner, you know."

"All right. Now I think of it, these paper shears need sharpening, so I'll give you a job while I run to the foreman and get the figures. Say, would you want some impressions made of the stereotypes?"

"Impressions? How, so?"

"I mean, would you like to have a few thousand copies of each of these articles?"

"Most assuredly. I want at least fifty thousand of each kind."

"Whew. That will cost you a sight of money, my man."

"Well, I reckon it will. You just go and ask the boss. When you bring me the figures I will see whether I can scrape up the cash to pay for them."

He then sat to work to grind the shears, and the clerk withdrew, uncertain whether he had succeeded in taking the measure of this customer. When he returned ten minutes later, the tinker handed him the shears, saying proudly: "There's a job for you, sir, as is a job. If you are as sharp as them shears, you'll die a millionaire sure. How much, did you ask? Only a dime, sir. Thank you sir," and the tinker pocketed the coin with a relish pleasant to behold.

"And now for your figures," he resumed: "What will it cost to have the plates made, and how much will you charge for fifty thousand copies each?"

The price is immaterial, so we pass it, but we must not forget the remarks of the clerk, when the tinker declared himself satisfied and gave his order.

"You are a stranger to us, Mr.—Mr.—what did you say your name was?"

"I didn't say anything, to my knowledge. Howsoever, my name is Dick Brown, and I aint ashamed of it neither."

"I hope not, Mr. Brown; but what I meant is this: You are a total stranger to us, and it is our habit in such cases to insist upon a payment of half the sum in advance. This means no personal reflection, Mr. Brown, but is merely a business precaution our experience has forced us to adopt."

"That's all right, sir," the tinker replied, diving in his pocket and pulling forth a considerable roll of bills. "That would be how much?"

The clerk smiled in making the simple division, whereupon the tinker handed him the money, asking with a sly wink for a receipt, which was handed him.

"You see," he said dryly, "this is a precaution my 'sperience has forced *me* to indopt. And when can I call for the first batch?"

The clerk mused. "This is Thursday," he said; "well call next Saturday evening, and you can have some of each kind."

Again the tinker shouldered his burden, calling from door to door, grinding a knife here, a pair of scissors there, and occasionally mending an umbrella. He sought private houses, trying to get access to kitchens and stables and engaging the inmates during his work whenever an opportunity offered. Towards noon he reached the grocery, where Sophie received him with a gracious smile and a substantial dinner, which he dispatched with the readiness of a man, whose stomach and conscience are both in excellent condition. Gottlieb and his wife joined in the meal, although an occasional tinkling of the store bell, compelled one of the couple to withdraw for a minute or two.

"Well, Mr. Brown," Gottlieb inquired, after seating himself, "how do you like the business by this time?"

"Immensely," replied Richard. "You see it pays first rate, for I have pocketed one dollar and fifteen cents this morning. Besides, it gives one access to the basement and the stable, which is of incalculable value. Of course, a fellow has to be cautious, but when I get my pamphlets, I can do much, and I hope, efficient work."

"But what is *one* in such a big city? Merely a drop in an ocean."

"True enough. For that reason I secured the assistance of the documents, mute, but nevertheless eloquent preachers. Besides, I shall engage co-workers, where and whenever I meet them."

"But there are so many frauds, you know."

"That is true; but you can generally distinguish the ring of the genuine metal from the spurious counterfeit. Besides I have my phonographs, you know. With their assistance I shall unearth many a fraud, I warrant."

"I trust you will; nay I *know* you will, for such zeal as yours is always sure of success. I wish I could engage more actively in the work. It seems so trifling to sell a pound of sugar, or a quart of molasses while you work and toil like a Turk."

"Well, I never knew that Turks work so very hard. Don't fret, Gottlieb. You will soon have your hands so full that you will not know which way to turn first."

"That's what I want. Where are you going to work this afternoon?"

"In the ward over here. I am anxious to begin with the drainage of the swamp, and think that I can find efficient workmen among your countrymen there."

"No doubt you can. I have sounded a good many and know you can get all you want, and good workers too."

"I am glad to hear it. I think I had better visit the hotels and boarding houses, eh?"

"That's the places. By the bye, we had a call last night from a fellow who has studied engineering or bridge building or something like it, in the old country. Perhaps he would be the man to boss the job."

"Do you know where he lives, and what his name is?"

"Yes, he gave me his address. Here it is: Daniel Wurzel, Hotel Rinehart."

"Ah, I know where that is. Well, no rest for the wicked you know. I must be moving."

And off he went, turning his steps to the narrow and poorly paved streets of a quarter inhabited by the poor and consequently neglected inhabitants of the city. We have no time to follow him in his wanderings. He called at many an humble household, made up in many instances of Germans, Irish or other foreign elements. Only here and there he met a native family marked generally by superior cleanliness of the members as well as the premises. Occasionally he met with a gruff rebuff, but such instances were rare, originating universally with additional drunkeness. On the whole the poor are kind and friendly to the poor, and pay readily and

cheerfully for the services they engage. In more than one instance Richard felt enclined to refuse the nickle or dime forming the compensation of his labor; but the fear of offending and the necessity of sustaining his character, checked the inclination. His knowledge of German proved very serviceable in that quarter. In fact, it may be truthfully asserted that without this knowledge his mission would have proved a failure. During his wanderings he came upon a big swinging sign, informing the public that this was Rinehart's hotel, a hostlery where man and beast could find the best of accomodations at very reasonable rates. Richard stepped into the bar-room, deposited his burden and demanded a glass of beer. The landlord brought it in person, and when the tinker addressed him in his native tongue he showed much friendliness and a disposition to converse.

"You talk German elegantly" he remarked when Richard had told him that he was a native of Occidentia."

"Have you been in the old country?"

"Yes, about six months and I saw many things there which pleased me. The trouble is wages are too low there."

"Ah, it isn't that so much as the military services. Living is cheap in Germany, but when a fellow is taken from his work, put into uniform and drilled and cajoled half to death for three or four years, we need not wonder to see him leave his fatherland."

"Are many immigrating just now?"

"More than can find work, sir. The house is full of fellows who cannot find work and hardly have the means of paying for their board. The fact is, I ought to turn half of them out; only it goes against a fellow's grit, you see."

Richard felt like grabbing and shaking the honest fellow's hand. He called for another glass of beer and said: "Well I have a friend who could give a number of them employment —and—"

"He could? the landlord inquired eagerly," then you can do all these poor fellows a good turn by recommending them to your friend. Will you do it?"

"Certainly and with pleasure. How many can you muster?"

"Oh, as many as your friend is likely to need."

"Fifty?"

"Yes a hundred. When will you know?"

"I'll try to see him to-night; but say is there not an engineer by the name of Wurzel in your hotel?"

"Yes, Daniel Wurzel. What of him? Would your friend want a chap of his caliber?"

"He will want an engineer, but whether this Wurzel would fill the bill, is another question"

"Well, it won't take long to find out. I think he is in his room. Excuse me a minute, I'll go and see."

He returned in less than ten minutes accompanied by a young man of hardly twenty. Richard felt inclined to doubt his ability to superintend a job of such magnitude when his own case rose in his mind, causing him to smile at his hasty conclusion and to resolve that he would not condemn before judging. The landlord introduced his protege, placed a glass of beer before both him and Richard, saying: "This is my treat, gentlemen, now fire away at each other."

Richard obeyed, asking the other what particular branch of engineering he had studied. When Mr. Wurzel replied that he had made road building a specialty Richard asked him whether he had had any practical experience in draining swamps and rectifying river beds. Wurzel replied that he had not, but that such things had formed parts of his course and that he flattered himself with the belief of being able to give satisfaction. Our friend reflected a moment, then said: "Mr. Wurzel, the party for whom I speak is not at leisure just now but if you have time to go with me to-morrow morning to the swamp in question, I can report to him what you think of the matter, and confer with his authorized agent."

Mr. Wurzel, looked at him in surprise. He was evidently astonished to meet with a scissor grinder using such choice language and grammar. Perhaps it increased his ad-

miration for a country where even tinkers indulge in such luxuries. However, he declared his readiness to accompany the tinker, and agreed to meet him at Gottlieb's grocery at eight a. m. precisely. Then Richard went on his way, making more acquaintances, seeing deeper into the condition, wishes, hopes and aspirations of the people every minute, thus making studies in a book to him inexpressibly interesting and becoming more so with every new page. After supper he requested Gottlieb to accompany him, and together they wended their way through the scenes of his afternoon's experience. This time he left his tools and implements at home, visiting merely the places of recreation where the poor try to forget the toil of to-day and the care of to-morrow. As he gazed upon them, he began to understand why so many of them yield to the charm of strong drink. With the laborer it is nothing but work, work, work, hard during the day, and sleep the slumber of exhaustion during the night, and unless there is an interval of excitement, an hour snatched from the hum drum of life in the evening, that is the interregnum between the despot of toil and the despot of lethargetic slumber, he misses the only charm of life, in fact, the inducement to live. He knows not the stimultus of intellectual pursuits, and would be too exhausted to enjoy them if he knew them. So he yields to the charms of King Alcohol, and drains the cup, which, for a while brings oblivion, but in whose dregs death is lurking. In the tavern frequented by the Irish, the offerings were mostly made at the shrine of whisky, while the Germans worshipped almost exclusively at that of Gambrinus, but, while Richard perceived that their potations were less besotting, and the results less brutalizing, he could not help perceiving that the excesses of both parties tend the same way, *i. e.*, demoralization and the ruin of health. He pondered deeply on these manifestations, seeing clearly that he would have to grapple with them in his struggles for the elevation of his race. He was no temperance fanatic, and saw plainly that it is not prohibition but self-government which was needed. Would the time ever come

when man would do away with stimulants of every kind? Perhaps; but meanwhile, people must learn to control a passion which degrades and ruins, not only individually, but collectively; andif they were too weak, if past suffering sand hardships had unmanned them, he was convinced of the propriety of restricting it, and limiting its gratification to a compass which, if not totally harmless, would at least prevent a sudden destruction of the devotee and his family, giving him time for a continued fight against his tyrant. Gottlieb introduced him to several hostlers, who made it a business to lodge and feed emigrants, and to help them in procuring employment. Some of these fellows were undoubtedly of the Shylock class, sucking the life blood of their patrons to kick them into the street when the last cent was spent, but many were real and true philanthropists, exhibiting a disinterestedness which warmed Richard's heart, and convinced him of a fact which he had dimly felt before, that the poor, as a class, are much more generous than the wealthy, and that neither church nor caste has monopolized virtue. Mr. Rinehart's face brightened when he saw Richard and his famulus enter the guest room. He insisted upon treating them to a glass of beer, and took such umbrage at Richard's declination of this civility, that our friend quickly retracted his remonstrance, remembering, that this man's means of showing his good will was limited to a very narrow compass, and that, to hurt his feelings, was just as wrong as to wound those of a moralist or a duchess. The inn keeper told him that he had fully a hundred men ready for him, a declaration forcing from Richard the statement that his patron would undoubtedly employ them if Mr. Wurzel would report favorably the next morning. When he finally said farewell, he had gained the esteem of the crowd. "How easy it is, Gottlieb," he said to his companion, "to gain the good will of the masses. Is it not very strange that there are so few philanthropists among the rich? A few of them strive to benefit the people, it is true; but nine times out of ten the aggrandizement or gratification of self lies at the bottom of the movement, and the noise with

which it is proclaimed to the world, is universally greater than the benefit itself."

Richard did not confine his explorations to the German element this evening. As stated before he visited several Irish hostelries, where he met with, and enjoyed the healthy humor distinguishing the sons and daughters of the Emerald Isle. To him these men and women appeared like big children, exhibiting their ingenuity, but also unconcernedness. Here also, he found many strong and willing arms, but lacking the means of gaining a livelihood. He formed the resolution of helping them also to the extent of his ability, quelling with difficulty a sigh engendered by the consciousness of his feeble strength and narrowness of his means. Never before had he been so deeply impressed with the necessity of a social reform and the removal of conditions which permit a few to roll in ease and luxury and deprive vast multitudes from getting that work which will ensure not luxury and pleasure, but the barest necessities. At nine he stole through the passage and entered the office of Uncle Calculus, where he found his aunt in waiting. She looked at him keenly, expecting to discover some mark of disappointment or fatigue. He understood her glance, and said gayly: "Sorry to dissapoint you, aunty, I ain't quite tired and disgusted yet."

"But Dick, did you not meet with many things which disgusted you? Now tell me truly."

"Yes, I did, Aunt Laura, but I am sorry to say that they originated with the so-called upper classes, not with my clients, the poor. Oh, Aunt Laura, never before was I so deeply impressed with the necessity of this work, and mind, this is only the first day. How much will the coming weeks and months intensify this conviction. Indeed, there is only one thing I am afraid of, namely: that the sight of the sufferings of the poor and the heartless cruelty of the rich will aggravate me that I shall forget the counsel of prudence and discretion and stir the people up to a warfare of the knife, and to the bitter end."

"You alarm me, Dick."

"Well, when thus tempted I shall come to you and listen to the promptings of a heart true and pure. But see here, Aunt Laura, I am going to take a young engineer to our tract to-morrow morning. If he brings you a slip containing the letters O. K., tell him that Mr. Velder has left matters with you, and that you will let him know what shall be done in the matter."

"All right, Richard. Would it be well if I made you, that is the tinker, a kind of foreman in the matter."

"No, aunty, that would not work. You see, foremen are not generally chosen from scissor grinders."

"That's a pity, Dick."

"Well, so it is; but I think we can manage in this way. You had better go with us to-morrow morning. In that way you can take in the situation and afterwards interpret more readily my wishes and directions. I can not do much until I get my circulars and may as well engage to work out there with the other chaps."

"Well, that is a good idea. Why, you are not going Dick?"

"Yes I am, aunty. Mind, I have been on my feet all day and must retire in season, if I expect to be on hand to-morrow morning. Mind, eight o'clock precisely. If we start later we shall miss the nine o'clock train."

Just as the big clock of the distant City Hall struck ten on the following morning three persons ascended the knoll of Richard's purchase, and on reaching the top looked curiously around. It was Mrs. Kean, Richard and Herr Wurzel. Richard pointed out to the letter the extent of his purchase and then awaited his decision without asking a question.

"And this knoll belongs to the tract?" the engineer inquired.

"Yes, sir. If I am rightly informed it extends several hundred feet beyond its base."

"Then the matter is easy enough. The knoll will have to be cut and the bed of the creek rectified to its mouth."

"I understand that is Mr. Velder's view of the matter. Is it not, Mrs. Kean?"

"It is. He has discussed the matter more than once in my presence. Then you would begin with the cut, Mr. Wurzel."

"Yes madam, but would only cut it sufficiently deep to secure enough soil to form the dams we shall need. It will be necessary to turn the water from the old bed, to deepen and straighten it."

"Ah, I see, and when the new bed is made you'll cut through here and turn the water into it?"

"Exactly. We shall then use the rest of the earth to place a dam across the old channel and stop the flow of water entirely in that direction."

The tinker nodded his head approvingly, causing Mrs. Kean to say: "Well, Mr. Wurzel, I feel confident that Mr. Velder will be fully satisfied with your idea, when he returns, and as he is very anxious to have this matter pushed, you will oblige me by making a superficial estimate of the cost to-day, and calling with it to-morrow morning. Have you an idea how many hands you shall need to complete this work during the summer and fall?"

"That is pretty hard to say. However a hundred able laborers can accomplish a good deal in three or four months."

"Well, Mr. Brown—Mr. Brown is a neighbor, you know a good many people in the ward back of our house. If I pay you for your time, would you be kind enough to charge yourself with picking out such men as you think calculated to do good work?"

"I am at your service, ma'm, and if you and Mr. Wurzel will let me, I have a notion to pitch in myself."

"Why, that *would* be nice. Well, I suppose there is nothing more for us to do here, so we may as well return to the station. I see it is just twenty minutes until the next train, and if we bestir ourselves, we can make it, I think."

On the train Mr. Wurzel inquired: "Have you formed any plan for housing and boarding the working force, Mrs.

Kean? You see there are no accommodations of that sort in the neighborhood; so we will probably have to put up a few shanties, and let some families see to the boarding."

"That is a good idea. I am unused to such matters, and if you and Mr. Brown will be kind enough to make the needful arrangements, I'll compensate you for your time and trouble."

We need not relate in detail the arrangements made, nor the beginning or completion of the work. Mr. Wurzel proved himself a highly efficient engineer, in spite of his youth, and managed the work with such skill and dispatch, that the Fall was not fully spent when the water was turned into the new channel, and the reclaimed land ready for drainage. The stagnant water was first gathered in ditches running from both sides, either close to, or entirely into the new bed. In the latter case, the land drained itself; in the former an engine on wheels was engaged to pump the water out, and when the winter was over, the land was perfectly dry and ready for building purposes. We may as well add at this place that Richard divided the land in lots, not to sell, but on which to erect small cottages, which he rented at very low rates to people whom he found worthy, making, however, a few stipulations which the occupants had to sign, to be admitted to the premises. No one was permitted to sell whiskey or other ardent beverages of a similar character. There was one place, however, where the people of the village could secure beer in small quantities, the landlord agreeing to forfeit his lease in case he violated the spirit of this condition. Mr. Rinehart declared his willingness to rent the tavern, and as Richard had found him to be an honest, fair, and intelligent person, he granted his request. Before we return to the next movement of this worthy, we may as well state that Mr. Wurzel was not dismissed at the completion of the drainage, but retained at a regular salary to superintend the development and management of the other bodies of land, which, as we have stated, his patron had bought shortly after his return from Europe. Some of these were near the city, suitable for fruit and veg-

etable farms; others were in distant parts of the State, and some hundreds of miles away, in climes so different as to produce fruit and cereals of quite a different nature. To these places Richard sent his proteges, suiting their mission always to their liking and disposition, thus insuring success in nine cases out of ten. These operations consumed very nearly the money he had secured in Europe and from the sale of his phonograph; but as the million due annually from the lease of the telephone was in reserve, he did not experience serious embarrassment from the lack of funds. And now let us once more attach ourselves closely to his heels and learn the additional means by which he expects to execute plans, both gigantic and difficult.

CHAPTER XI.

"AND SOME OF IT FELL ON GOOD SOIL, AND BORE AN HUNDRED FOLD."

When the tinker called at the printing house on the evening designated, the entire edition of his pamphlet was ready.

"We had to box them," the clerk said, pointing to a good sized box standing in the hall. "The box and the packing is one dollar extra."

The tinker paid the bill, engaged an expressman and had his treasure hauled to his room in the grocery. "Use them judiciously," he said to Gottlieb, pointing to the papers. "If they are not eloquent, they at least contain the truth, which is bound to prevail, sooner or later. On Sunday morning he stuffed his pockets as full as he could, and started on his errend. This time, of course without his tools and apparatus. Nor did he go into the houses, but went his way to the neighboring park, which was full of loiterers, seeking fresh air, and trees and grass and flowers, which many of them did not once see and admire during the busy week. Richard sat down on

a bench, which was occupied by an elderly gentlemen of striking appearance. He wore an overcoat, in spite of the warm weather, and had it buttoned to his neck. His gray locks were covered by a broad-rimmed felt hat of much wear and ancient cut. His shoes had buckles of huge size and so outlandish a shape as to betray at once the foreigner. He wore large glasses, but when he wanted to see anything at a distance he regularly looked over them, showing on such occasion eyes both intelligent and benevolent. When Richard sat down beside him, he nodded pleasantly and said: "Fine weather, this."

"Fine enough, only a little warm."

"Do you think so? Well, I am getting old, you see, and my blood must be getting sluggish, for I feel very comfortable with my overcoat on."

The man had a very strong foreign accent, which we do not render, because it gives an air of ludicrous to persons by no means funny, or two things and thoughts far from trite. When Richard did not reply the old gentleman continued: "In my country, you see, the weather is mostly so cold that one enjoys the sunshine doubly."

"You hail from the north, then?"

"From the north of Sweden. I have come to this country to find a little girl, a niece, whose mother, my sister, died a few month's since, leaving Bertha without protection, you see."

"And have you found her?"

"Not yet. I begin to think the address is a little indefinite. Here it is."

He pulled a little note book from his pocket, opened it, and let Richard read in large round, but rather stiff characters: Mrs. Edda Rasmussen, Plutonia. "You see, that was my sister's name," he said in explanation.

Richard was astonished at this simplicity. "Why," he asked wonderingly, "you surely did not expect to find your niece in a country of seven millions with this clue alone?"

"It seems rather hard," the stranger replied with a

dubious smile. "At all events, I have failed thus far to discover any trace of her."

"But don't you know whether she lives in this city?"

"I do not, although I am inclined to doubt it, for in my sister's last letter she speaks of a little country town as her place of residence. This is rather big for a country town, is it not?"

"I should think so. But have you not this letter to guide you?"

"That is the trouble. I lost it, together with the one from Bertha, in which she informes me of her mother's death. I had no idea that this country is so large. Else I would have waited for another letter from my niece."

"It strikes me that would be the proper thing. It seems they do not study geography much in your country."

"Oh yes, but more in the abstract, you see, in fact, I know more of the moon and the stars than of this continent. But I must leave you. I make it a point to inquire of everybody I meet. In that way I may sooner or later receive information leading to Bertha's discovery. Good bye." Richard felt strongly tempted to retain the man and volunteer his assistance, if not in his search, at least in posting him a little on the character of the country; but the stranger's appearance was so dignified in spite of his simplicity that he felt reluctant to patronize him. So he let him go, and soon forgot him in the pursuit of his own plans and aspirations. The park was unusually empty that morning, so Richard strolled along its shady avenues until the splashing of the water of a fountain attracted his attention. It was hid from view by a dense undergrowth of bushes, but Richard could see the water of a little basin glimmer through the leaves, and pushed the bushes aside to gain a more perfect view of it. He had nearly reached the inner edge of the leafy fringes when he perceived the form of a man gazing with deep absorption into the water. His back was turned to Richard, and so engrossed did he appear by his thoughts that he failed to notice the approach of our friend. He held a revolver in his right hand, a circum-

stance which aroused Richard's suspicion, for the man did not look like one bent upon sport, to say nothing of the fact that shooting was strictly forbidden in the park. He therefore quickened his steps, using at the same time greater precaution, to avoid all noise. He had no desire to create a scene, and if the man contemplated only some sport or other, Richard had no desire to make a fool of himself. It would be well, however, to be sufficiently near to check his hand if he contemplated self destruction. He advanced until he was only one step from the other, but just then the hand holding the revolver was quickly raised, and would probably have sent a bullet through the head of the would-be suicide, if Richard had not grasped it, and checked its movement with all the strength at his command. The other started violently, and when, on turning, he discovered the nature of the impeding force, an angry red mounted into his face and cheeks. He tried to wrench himself free from Richard's grasp and when he failed became so angry that he clinched his left hand and raised it as if to strike the intruder. Richard found no difficulty in warding off the blow, and said before it could be repeated: "Don't sir, it is of no use. If you want to destroy yourself, you must postpone the matter until I am out of the way."

"Who are you, and what right have you to interfere with me?"

"Two questions at once," Richard replied, smiling pleasantly. "As to the first, I am your brother, and it is upon this relationship that I base my claim of interference."

The other breathed violently, then hissed through his teeth: "Brother, I have no brother, want no brother; so withdraw and let me finish a work which will be done as soon as you stop your meddling."

"Well, in that case a few minutes ought not matter much to you. Come now, won't you sit down here and tell me what desperate straight forced you into such a foolish escapade? Perhaps I can counsel, and what is better, aid you."

"I do not want your counsel, and as for aid, I am past aid?"

"You are excited man, and look at things in altogether too gloomy a light. Do you need money? I am prepared to furnish it to a limited extent. Are you in need of sympathy? I am ready to offer it in unlimited quantities." He spoke so frankly, so kindly and at the same time so cheerfully, that the other could not resist the charm.

His clinched hand relapsed and he stammered somewhat confusedly: "You are a queer one, *you* are."

"I'll be anything to accommodate you. Now be a good fellow, and tell me what ails you. You said correctly that I cannot hinder your self destruction if you persevere in your desire to die. So you ought to give me a chance to try my panacea. So that is a good fellow. Lend me that pop-gun of yours for a little while and tell me all that troubles you."

He took the revolver from a willing hand, sat down on the turf, and said, drawing the other to his side: "So now I am ready; imagine I am your father confessor, who is but too willing to absolve you."

By this time a complete reaction had set in with the other. Great tears sprang into his eyes and ran copiously over his cheeks, while convulsive sobs raised and shook his breast. Richard remained silent, but continued to hold the sufferer's hand and to give it an occasional pressure. After a few minutes, the man collected himself, and said, returning the pressure: "You see, I am not used to kindness, so it kind of crushed me. But now tell me who are you, and what causes you take such a strange interest in a fellow you never saw before?"

"Did I not tell you I am your brother? And is not that a sufficient explanation and reason?"

"Well, I reckon it is, or least ways ought to be, but it is rather queer that I never met such a brother in the world, until I was just ready to leave it."

"Maybe you were blind, my friend?"

"I don't think I was," replied the other bitterly. "I have

met with more cuffs than kisses, only because I tried to aid my brothers."

Richard started. "Because you aided your brothers? In that case you must have had brothers."

"Well, I tried to treat them as such, but little thanks did I get for my trouble."

The recollection of his wrongs once more darkened his brow, and Richard seeing this and thinking that a recital of his trials would relieve him, said cheerfully:

"Tell me all about it, sir."

The other thought a moment, then said: "All right. If it don't do any good, it surely can do no harm, and will relieve my heart. So here she goes: "My name is Duncan, Charles Duncan. I am just thirty years of age and a machinist by trade. I might have said a *good* machinist, and not stretched it either. I had finished learning when I was twenty, and brighter prospects than mine the world hardly ever saw. When I was twenty-three I married the girl I loved, and you might travel far and near sir, and not find a better, prettier and kinder woman."

"Is she living?" Richard interrupted.

"Why yes. Why do you ask? Oh, I understand sir, and blush to think that I could entertain the thought of leaving her."

"You surely must have been dreadfully provoked."

"I was, as you will soon see for yourself. Well I worked in the shop and she in the house, and a happier couple you never saw, until I began to read these socialist books and magazines. Then things began to change. I learned that the capitalists take the lion's share, leaving the workman only a pittance. I began to think, and thinking brought on action. I communicated my thoughts to others, and before long we began to organize, to combine, and resist the usurpations of capital. Sometimes we were successful, sometimes we lost, but our losses somehow swallowed up our gains, and still left big deficits. Being ready with my tongue I soon took a prominent part in these agitations, and was regularly chosen

as spokesman, or at least one of them, when we wished to present our grievances or make our demands from our employers. This made me prominent in the eyes of my mates but dangerous in those of the shop owners, and it was not long before I had to pay dearly for my fame. To make a long story short, I became adopted, and my character as an agitator was signaled from town to town, from shop to shop, until I could not find work, no matter where I would apply. Nor was it the machine shops alone where I met with deaf ears, but somehow my name of fame, if you prefer it, had spread to all sorts of bosses and manufacturers, making it more difficult every day to earn even the simplest necessities of life. My wife and child suffered accordingly, and the circumstance that my good wife never by word, or mien, or gesture reproached or blamed me for my short comings, made the burden none the easier to bear, you better believe."

"Your wife must be a good woman, Duncan."

"A good woman? Better say an *angel* and you come nigher the truth."

"And yet you had it in your heart to leave her. Do you think your death would have made matters easier for her?"

Duncan winced, then said: "I thought you wanted to comfort not scold me."

"So I will, but I want you to see the utter folly of such a step, and your solemn promise not to repeat the cowardly attempt."

The crest-fallen man put his hands into Richard's extended palm, saying solemnly: "I promise."

"That's right. Now let me say a few words regarding your doings: Do you still believe that capital takes the lion's share?"

"I do."

"Do you still believe that this present social system has the tendency to degrade our race, and will ultimately reduce it to the level of the brute?"

"I do, emphatically."

"Then I do not see why I should regret your actions and endeavors in behalf of your brethren."

"But see the sad results to myself and my family, sir."

"They sprang from your faulty measures, not your principles. And now, Charles Duncan, if I offered you a chance to resume your labors in behalf of your race, giving you a fair assurance that neither you nor those dear to you would suffer in consequence, would you feel inclined to resume them with all your might, strength and soul, and never throw down your weapons until death relieved you?"

We record Richard's words, but what we can not render is the simple grace and grandeur of his gestures, the fire of his eyes, the magnetism streaming from his pores, the unspeakable confidence in the correctness of the principles he advocated. Charles Duncan, however, saw all these things. Is it a wonder, then, that they effected him like a strong volcanic battery, and made his whole body shake with excitement? At first he started as if in a dream, then wonderment gave way to enthusiasm, and when Richard ended, he gasped: "Who are you? A new Messiah? Never before have I heard any one speak like you."

"I am no Messiah, my good fellow, only a mortal, weak and frail like you, but animated by the burning desire of bettering my fellows' condition, to live for that purpose and, if needs be, die for it."

"And you assure me that my dear ones will be taken care of? Mind, I don't say of *me*, for I care little, provided they will suffer no want."

"They shall not. I not only promise, but shall convince you of my ability to make good my promises."

"Then I am yours with soul and body."

"Nay, not mine, Duncan, but thy brethren's."

"But you will now tell me who you are, will you not?"

"I am only a tinker, scissors grinder and umbrella mender; but this profession amply supplies my wants. I shall teach you its mysteries, secure you an outfit, and then send you among the people, to preach the new gospel."

He watched Duncan's face closely, to see the effect of these words. He pondered a few moments, then said:

"That is a good way of reaching the masses; but say, where will I leave my wife and daughter?"

"I'll take care of them. I have friends who will be glad to administer to their wants, as if they were their own kin and kith, and even to day I shall introduce you to these friends. Where is your family?"

"In an attic of the —— ward. You will find poverty printed on every feature of the miserable abode."

"Never mind poverty. They will be comfortable before to-night. And now let us go. I shall give you an outline of my plans and views as we go."

They left the bushes, Richard feeling instinctively that he had made a great haul that morning. On the way to Duncan's lodgings Richard sketched to him his intentions and the causes which had led to them. He showed him the papers begging him to familiarize himself with the views they entertained, and the reforms they suggested. "We must recruit followers wherever we can," he said, "and send them to all the cities and villages of the land to preach the new gospel. It is there you missed it, Duncan. You attempted to reach before the crops were ripe. Such doings are like the tilt of Don Quixote against the windmill. Educate the masses to the work in store, and all the rest is easy. Neglect this feature and failure is sure and inevitable."

"My own sad experience has taught me that you are right; but, oh! this seems such slow work, and the goal so far away. I feel sure, that many generations will have to pass away, before the crops can be reaped."

"I trust not, Duncan; indeed I am convinced that the goal is not very far off, and that a decade of efficient work will suffice to take us there."

"You really think so? Oh, you inspire me with new courage. I fear, however, that good apostles will be rare, and that but few will fancy the idea of tramping through the land in the capacity of tinkers or scissors grinders."

"In that case they are hardly fitted. I will tell you in confidence that I am possessed of moderate means to make up any deficit which may arise; but beg you not to mention this to others. We want laborers in the vineyard of the Brotherhood, but no mercenary spirits who will work only with and for the expectation of filthy lucre."

"I approve of your prudence; but here we are. Be careful in climbing these rickety stairs."

He led the way up three flights, and then stopping before a door, said: "Stop here a moment. I'll go in to see whether she is in condition to receive you."

He entered, but returned in a few seconds. "Remember that this is no palace," he whispered.

Richard nodded assuringly, and entered a room whose ceiling was hardly seven feet from the floor. There was scarcely any furniture, and this was of the plainest character. A dilapidated stove stood in the corner, but the pallid face of the woman he saw and her little daughter as well, showed plainly that no strengthening food of any kind had been prepared on it lately Duncan seemed to have prepared his wife in a measure, for the change in store, for in her eyes was a gleam of hope, and a smile passed over her face as she greeted the visitor. Mrs. Duncan was a person of more than ordinary comeliness, but the hardships and privations of the last years had left deep traces on her face. The little girl who seemed about five years old, was also surprisingly handsome, and Richard's heart went out to both mother and child, as he greeted them. Mr. Duncan, himself, seemed deeply moved, probably by the recollection of the attempt, which would have made a reunion impossible, if our friend had not so timely interfered.

"Cheer up mamma," he said, with an attempt at gayety, "the hard times are over, for this gentleman has promised me employment, which will make and keep us all comfortable. He wishes to take you and Fay to friends, so get things ready for removal."

"And ain't you going with us, Charley?"

"Of course, he is," cried Richard, encouragingly. "Who could think of parting such a loving couple."

Mrs. Duncan looked at him to detect some sign of badinage, but read an unmistakable expression of friendliness and sympathy in his eyes, that she felt reassured, saying with a nod: "Thank you." Then turning to her husband, she said almost gayly: "Well, Charley, it won't take very long to remove our goods. In fact after selling the stove for old iron, you might make a bundle of the rest, and carry it."

Duncan laughed, but not very heartily, at which we need not wonder, as it is rather a doubtful amusement to laugh at one's own poverty. Richard looked at his watch, saying: "Why, it is nearly eleven o'clock. How time flies in good company. I hope you will all do us the honor of being our guests for the rest of the day. I want you to become acquainted with the excellent people in whose midst you are going to live, Mrs. Duncan. They are Germans and speak but broken English, but their hearts are right, and its language is cosmopolitan, you know."

"Germans?" Mrs. Duncan inquired; "why that will be no drawback, as my parents were German and I learned that language from infancy."

"Better and better. Duncan, do you know the grocery on Lemon street, opposite the livery stable?"

"I do. Is that the place where we are going?"

"Exactly. I will leave you now, to inform Mrs. Grad of your coming, to enable her to make the little additional preparations which your arrival will occasion."

"I fear we shall be much trouble."

"I assure you that you will not. Sophie has no female acquaintances, and will be delighted to talk German to you. Farewell. Be sure to be in season."

After he had left, Mrs. Duncan went up to her husband, looked him straight in the face and inquired: "Charles, what does all this mean? Where did you meet Mr. Brown?"

"Duncan's face twitched convulsively. He drew her almost roughly into his embrace and stammered: "Alice, do

not ask me. That man saved me from death. To him you owe not merely my life, but the prospect of living henceforth without fear and care."

At first she looked wonderingly at him, then the truth seemed to dawn upon her, for she shuddered convulsively and clutched her husband with a fervor, as if she would never release him again. The child also crept into the embrace, and then and there rose in their hearts the vow, that they would endeavor to repay the debt of gratitude they had contracted.

An hour later they arrived at the grocery, where they were received with open arms, and countenances gleaming with satisfaction, that they must have been confirmed skeptics indeed, to doubt the sincerity of their hosts.

Sophie and Alice, as we may as well call her, at once launched into German, evoking from Duncan the remark, that he would have to learn German, to prevent being sold by these ladies half a dozen times every day. Richard assured him that the idea was an excellent one, as it would increase both his usefulness and his profits, and surely earn the money for an extra dress for madam, if nothing more.

The dinner that day was a jolly one, for, in addition to the good cheer, there were cheerful hearts and hopeful minds. Duncan, who only a few hours ago had been on the verge of despair, now yielded to an irresistable impetus, and enlivened the company with his jokes. How easy it is to be happy, and how little it takes to make us so, if we only follow the path marked out by prudence and moderation. The incubus of want and wretchedness once removed, and the spirits of Richard's proteges rebounded like India rubber when freed from pressure.

The afternoon was devoted to the discussion of their plans. Duncan had not said too much in asserting that his wife was one of the best women living. She combined a sweet temper with intelligence and will power, and showed an enthusiasm for Richard's grand and noble idea which filled him with admiration considering the injury which an ill

judged precipitation of her husband had done her worldly interests. She was keen enough to see that the principle is not responsible for its misapplication, and alhough the work mapped out for her husband implied a separation from him for weeks, and maybe months, she not only refrained from raising objections, but cheered and encouraged Duncan by word and mien. More than once Richard caught a significant look of his new friend, saying: "Ain't she a daisy?" to which he replied with so vigorous a nod as to make the other doubly happy. It was agreed that Duncan's presence was not needed in Plutopolis, as Richard intended working that field and felt sure of being able to secure all the co-operation he needed from more ordinary material. Duncan was therefore to go to one of the interior cities to begin the work there. After due consultation, Lakopolis was selected, as this city was not only of immense size and population, but also growing at an astonishing rate, containing at the same time a more than ordinary number of young, energetic and intelligent people, liable to be affected by the teachings of the new apostle. Duncan, however, was not to go until he had prepared himself for his new career by the acquisition of the arts which had given Richard so much trouble. Duncan was to draw upon Gottlieb, whenever, in the course of his operations, he needed funds; but was enjoined to use the utmost economy, as Richard considered his money merely a trust, which he held for the people. Nor did he deem it wise to confide to his ally the full extent of his resources. When Duncan begged him to give him an outline of the course which he ought to pursue, Richard said:

"This is a difficult task, as your course depends much upon circumstances; still, in the main, I would advise that you canvass the city in your professional character, visiting principally the habitations of laboring people and the domestic quarters of the rich, for the servants of both sexes are as much interested in our movement as the mechanic and the day laborer. Scatter your circulars freely, but be sure to add verbal instructions to the printed matter, as the subject is

novel to a great many, and the intellect often so dormant as to need awakening and stimulation. While I would travel over as much territory as is at all consistent with thoroughness, I would foster the seed that I had sown, and re-visit over and over parties betraying interest and promising positive or even neglecting support."

"Would you form societies?"

"By all means, although you will have to use the utmost discretion in this feature. Guard against demanding fees or contributions to avoid the idea and suspicion of selfish motives Only when the mind of your members have become enlightened; when they have begun to look upon the love of self, and that of gold as a degrading element in the human character, accept, and even stimulate their disposition to contribute to the cause by sums adapted to their means, for even the greatest treasure would soon become exhausted under the drainage which my funds will soon be subjected. Remember first and last, and always, that information is the first and most indispensible condition of our success."

"And would you head the book by a declaration of certain principles or obligations?"

"Yes, in general terms. We must be cautious, Duncan. It would be impolitic, to arouse the suspicion of our adversaries at this early date by the display of bravado, or our ultimate and far reaching intentions. I need not inform *you* that our foes are powerful, if they are weak in numbers, and trust sincerely that you will never forget the necessity of prudence and discretion. Guard even against too full an initiation of your allies into the portentious character of the innovations at which we aim. Only, as they grow in knowledge, widen the scope of their views, and steel them to the consequences, which these innovations imply."

"Then you anticipate trouble, Richard?"

Richard hesitated a moment; then he said: "That depends. If my hopes and expectations are not fallacious; if our leaven permeates all ranks, as it ought to, and surely will in course of time, we shall, I think, be able to effect the solu-

tion of our problem in a peaceful and harmonious manner. If, however, a few selfish people resist our just demands, at a time when the great majority of the people demand their inalienable rights, they must bear the consequences, and blame themselves, and not us, for being trampled upon."

He paused a moment, but seeing the cheeks of Mrs. Duncan blanching a little under the idea which his remarks suggested, he resumed: "I know that some people will object to these suggestions, holding that no one ought to be compelled, and that such compulsion is tyranny. I can only say that at present the majority, and often small majority rules. The majority which I anticipate will not be a small one; it will and must be overwhelming, else the crops are not ripe for harvesting. Utopians will tell you that man should be absolutely free to choose and that no one has the right to compel him to labor if he chooses to be idle. Well, our race is not capable of occupying such a lofty platform at present, nor will it be ready to occupy it for centuries to come, unless we first lift it upon a platform allowing a greater scope of vision and comprehension, and it is for such a platform I am working. A noble mother in her dying hour warned me against utopian dreams, and never will I forget the lesson thus inculcated."

His hearers sat like spell-bound. At length Duncan heaved a deep sigh and said: "Your mother was right, and I fully agree with you; but do you know, Richard, that you are rather a queer grinder? I did not know that there was much philosophy in a grind stone."

Richard colored slightly, then said with a smile: "Well, I did not always turn the crank; but the same thing holds true of you, and the main thing is, that we fill our new post creditably to ourselves, and profitably to our brethren."

"Give me your hand on that, Richard. But now let me have the preamble you have decided upon."

"Here it is," he replied, drawing a note book from his pocket and handing it to Duncan.

"Won't you please read it for the benefit of the others?"

Richard opened the book and began: "We, the undersigned, deem the present social system unjust, and calculated to degrade not only the working classes, and the poor, but even those enjoying an undue portion of the wealth of the earth, hereby combine to form the order of the nation, and pledge ourselves to consider with due circumspection, and support with all our strength and energy all honorable means and measures proposed by our order, to bring about the abolition of the present wrongs and substitute conditions, more liberal, just and humane." "Don't you think that covers the ground without exciting suspicion?"

"It means a good deal," replied Duncan with a significant smile "but I reckon they won't take much umbrage at this preamble, being used to simular declarations worth little more than the paper which they cover."

"Nor will these be worth more, Charles, without a general spread of knowledge, or rather wisdom among the people. Knowledge is the firm platform on which they must place their batteries, unless the wish to accomplish their own ruin by the concussion of the guns."

"Even so. Can you spare me this little book?"

"Yes a dozen of them. Be sure to secure ample helpers in your work, for you and I alone might work a hundred years and not reach half the people interested in our work."

"I understand, and you may depend that I shall use all the strength, circumspection and perseverance at my command."

"That's all I can ask. A rogue you know promises more than he can fulfill."

Happy minutes fly very fast, and before they know it the hour of departure had come. The Duncans were to return to their attic for that night, and move their scanty goods early in the morning. Gottlieb possessed a spring wagon with whose aid the transfer could easily and rapidly be made. Indeed, the hour of eight had hardly passed when the belongings of the Duncan's arrived at the grocery, the family following on foot. An hour later they were snugly quartered in a comfortable

room of the second story and Duncan ready to begin his apprenticeship, while Alice insisted on helping in the kitchen as well as the store. Even little Fay showed her willingness to help, succeeding marvelously in dispatching the raisins which Sophie gave her. Duncan learned faster than was expected, in fact faster than his teacher. His hands were harder, and therefore less liable to be blistered, and the handling of all kinds of tools in his profession was a powerful auxiliary which gave him a decided advantage over Richard. Only in covering old umbrellas he showed the same akwardness to the great satisfaction of Richard, who declared laughingly, that without this circumstance he would undoubtedly have split with envy. Seeing his pupil so apt he started on his daily wanderings, again traversing mostly the ward inhabited by poor and therefore to him, interesting people. On entering the shop of a tailor on a small scale he was intrusted with the sharpening of several shears. The tailor watched his work, saying: "I suppose this pays you pretty well?"

"It supplies my moderate wants, sir, although it probably falls considerably short of tailoring, I reckon."

The tailor shook his head. "I hardly think so, for my shop does not provide for my moderate wants."

"Well, I suppose your wants are greater."

"It ain't that. You see, a poor fellow can hardly compete with these large establishments, where they manufacture wholesale and sell with small profits."

"I reckon that is so. Capital is stretching out its arms on all sides like the devil fish, and like this fish, its embrace is fatal."

The tailor eyed him keenly. "You use mighty good language for a grinder," he said.

Richard was aware that he really talked above his trade, but he disliked slang, and avoided it as much as possible. "Well," he said in explanation, "I went to school considerably, and can't forget my old tricks. I follow this trade more from inclination than necessity."

"I see, and what you say is not only good grammar, but good sense. How much do I owe you?"

"Only twenty cents. Thank you, sir. Well, what I meant to say: The people are much to blame for this state of affairs."

"How so. How can they help it?"

"Havn't they the number and the power? Could they not shape the laws to suit themselves?"

"I suppose they could; but that will never be. You can't get them to pull one way, you see."

"You could, if you showed them the folly of their conduct, that is, if you educated them up to it."

"Well, who would take the trouble?"

"I, for one, am taking it. I try to throw light upon this subject, wherever I go."

"Well, if you ain't the queerest tinker I ever seed. Sit down, and let's talk a bit. I like to discuss this p'int."

"All right; I can spare a few minutes, if you can. What do you wish to discuss?"

"Well, the power to fight capital for instance. What can even a few hundred devils do against *one* millionaire?"

"A few hundred can do nothing, but a few hundred thousands, or rather *all* the laboring men of the country could."

"You can't make them see it in that light; one would say *gee,* the other *haw,* and the third wouldn't pull at all."

"As I said before. They are not enlightened on the subject and therefore blind to their interest, as well as to their power."

"'Tain't no use to try, sir. We have poor people now, and we'll always have them, and poor people have no time to argue the p'int."

"Well, friend, I tell you what I'll do. I'll leave you a few circulars here. Be kind enough to look them over, and when you are through with them, hand them to a neighbor. When I pass here again, I'll drop in and hear what you have to say."

"All right; give's your dokiments, and when you pass again, drop in and hear what I think of them."

Richard shouldered his apparatus and left. The tailor, on the other hand, sat down and was soon deeply absorbed in the circulars of the tinker. Let us look over his shoulder and see what he read:

To Whom It May Concern:

It concerns *you*; it concerns everybody, no matter whether old or young, rich or poor, for this article discusses our social conditions, that is, your condition, your neighbor's condition, everybody's condition.

Tell me: Are you satisfied with yours? Is your neighbor satisfied with his? If so, you and he are rare birds, suitable for exhibition and calculated to draw crowded houses. No, sir, you are not satisfied, nor is your neighbor satisfied, nor his neighbor, nor anybody, excepting perhaps the very few who roll in gold, and spend every day of their lives in luxury and indolence, and even these, if pressed, will confess in the innermost recesses of their hearts, that they are *not* satisfied, and that the life they lead is not worth living.

We all agree, then, that our social condition is not what it should be; but when we take a step further and say: "Come lend us your hand and strength; aid us in our endeavors to remove the evils threatening us with ruin and degredation!" You shrink back, saying: "What is the use? These things will always be so. We have always had sharks to devour the fat of the earth, and poor to sulk and grumble but do nothing else. It will always be so."

Now, how do you know? Is it not just as silly to assert this as for me to say: "It will *not* always be so, without giving you my reasons for this assertion? Do you think that if in the days of Rome's glory you had told a Roman that Rome, the city of his pride, the mistress of the world, would some day crumble into ruins, over which a mere shadow of its former glories would invite the pity of the world instead of its admiration. Do you think he would have credited your assertion or prophecy? Hardly, and yet that ancient Rome, the

dwelling place of several million people, lies low, bearing on her brow, a feeble monarch and a feebler hierarch."

You are like this ancient Roman, saying: "It can not be, it will never be," to which I answer. "Supposing you and I and all the people of the land, or at least an overwhelming majority should determine that it *should* be so; is there any power to prevent it? The trouble is, you and your neighbor, and thousands of others place their hands behind their backs, shake their heads dubiously and say: 'It will not be, it cannot be."'

Now follow me a moment. You know that we are on the road to ruin and degradation; that a social revolution is inevitable, a revolution which will undoubtedly shake the structure of human society to the very foundation, a revolution dire in proportion to its postponement, and apt to sweep away every vestige of civilization from the globe if sufficiently retarded. Yet you shrink back when you are asked to lend a helping hand. Would not the realization of our designs be a great boom to the human race? You acknowledge it would, and yet you refuse to join us? Why is this? You are not expected to make great sacrifices; you are only asked to give us your moral support. If we fail, the failure will not affect you. If we succeed, your condition will change from a wretched and perilous one into a glorious one. So glorious that you can hardly conceive its grandeur and magnificence.

THE TINKER.

"Hm, said the tailor, looking up with a puzzled look," this tinker beats the Methodist preacher on the corner all hollow. He is right, too, for if we would all of us pitch in we could twist the thing into any shape we please. Let us see, what he is really driving at." And he read on:

"How will we bring about the proposed social reform?" By organizing *the Order of the Nation* a brotherhood which disregards color and caste, rank and degree: a brotherhood based upon, and aiming at the recognition of the following principles:

1. All men are born equal.

This axiom, so grand, and yet so ineffectual, trite and hackneyed in our present condition of society, will resume its force and meaning when our order assumes control of the national affairs. Then all children will be educated alike, favored alike, and given the same chances in the pursuits of life.

2. The nation owns all the gifts of nature treasured up in the bowels of the earth, as well as the soil composing its surface and bearing the thousand fruits and cereals constituting the food of man.

3. The nation must own the highways of the land, preventing the baneful discrimination now prevailing to the detriment of the people and the aggrandizement of a few favorites.

4. The age of childhood will be solely devoted to the development of the body and the acquisition of knowledge to dispel that terrible cloud of ignorance, superstition and bigotry now hanging over and ruining this glorious land.

5. Perfect liberty of conscience must and shall prevail. At present such liberty is merely nominal as the statutes of several, nay nearly all states of this union are blotted with and by law controlling the actions of their citizens in regard to the observance of holidays and Sabbaths. Yea, more. Constant and determined efforts are being made to recognize a God in the constitution, thus uniting State and church and infringing upon the rights of citizens who deny the existence of such divinity.

6. Every member of the human society enjoying its advantages, is entitled to bear a proportionate share of its burden. In other words, every citizen is entitled to work for the maintainance of and preservation of its privileges.

At present, a large portion of society escapes this obligation, making the burden of the other sonorous to bear. We shall therefore aim at an equalization of this burden by distributing it upon *all* shoulders. Idlers are the foes of society.

7. Labor alone produces wealth. All laborers, therefore, are entitled to an equal share of the profits accrueing from

labor. As all are possessed of equal rights and give the same time to society, all should be paid alike. This is the basis upon which we propose to build a new and more equitable society. Every disinterested person will acknowledge its fairness, and only those who now own a preposterous share of the earth's emoluments, although they form a ridiculous minority, can and do object to it. The time will come, and come soon, when those who once denounced these principles will hide their faces in shame, if not in fear and trembling. In conclusion we shall show that they advocate the true interest not only of those which are poor and down-trodden, but even those who trample upon their brethren's rights and appropriate a share of the earth's wealth, at once shocking and gigantic.

The poor are benefitted by our reform.

This proposition need hardly be argued at length. The poor man has now much work and little pleasure. When his long hours of labor are over, he is too tired to enjoy anything, even supposing he had something to enjoy, which is not the case. Mental enjoyment is, beyond doubt the keenest, and this enjoyment their ignorance forbids them to engage in. Indeed, it is not saying too much to assert that the poor man's life is one long struggle without an intermixture of pleasure and recreation. We propose to educate him, thus enabling him to participate in the keen delight of mental enjoyment. Our reform will benefit the middle classes, containing the professional men, the teachers, small merchants, master mechanic, and artisans generally.

We need not point out the fact that but few professional men accumulate sufficient wealth to meet the days of old age without shrinking. The teachers, when getting past the age of usefulness, are flung off like old shoes or garments, hardly good enough to fill the rag bag. Such teachers we propose to make the nation's honored guests, thus freeing their minds from the fear of want and destitution.

Ask the small merchant, the master mechanic, whether he does not experience greater difficulty, every day, to compete with establishments located at central points, but send-

ing out their ramifications everywhere, encroaching upon the smaller local establishments, until nothing is left the occupants, but to close their places of business. Finally the blind, the deaf, the cripple, are interested in our success. Are these unfortunates to blame for their misfortune?" One should almost think so from the way we treat them. Far from being a burden in the days of our reform, they too will become the guests of the nation, being members of this nation—and therefore entitled to its wealth.

As stated before, we shall insist upon the performance of a fair amount of labor by *every one*, but this amount will be small when compared with that now enforced by a cruel and bitter necessity. Moreover, we do not expect our people to continue this work when age and infirmity demand a cessation and recreation. At an age to be determined by practice and experience, we propose to let our faithful laborers rest, thus giving them a chance to enjoy in ease and peace and prosperity, years so often marred by want and care.

Our rich men will be benefitted by our reform.

This looks like a bold assertion, but we shall find no trouble to prove it. Has any one ever seen a sound and healthy head upon a sick and festering body? The disease may be in the feet; it may be hidden from view by skillful contrivances, but sooner or later the head will also become infested with the malady. It is simply ridiculous in a proud and wealthy aristocracy to flatter itself with the hope and expectation of being spared the degredation to which they have condemned the masses. A brutal plebs will make brutal patricians. Let them bear this truth well in mind, before they continue to pursue their foolish course. But, without regard to the danger lurking in this direction, this plutocracy cannot avoid a deadly struggle in its own ranks. When the sharks have devoured the small fry they will turn against one another and the weaker must succumb to the stronger, until at last one gigantic monster remains, who will in turn be attacked and slain by the mob, emboldened by the reduction of its enemies in number and the gnawing of hunger. Let me warn you,

ye nabobs of the land. The day will *surely* come when you will tear one another, and slay each other in the greater zest and cruelty than the poor despised mob ever betrayed."

When Mr. Stich—we take the name from the sign over the door—had finished, he fell into a reverie so profound that we have not the heart to interrupt it, but hasten after Richard whom we overtake at the dirtiest spot of a rather dirty ward. He stands at the entrance of a court, his natural philantrophy battling with his sense of smell, as to his propriety of venturing on the premises. Let us cast a glance at them. The court is perhaps 150 feet long, by fifteen wide, a gutter running the entire length and serving as a receptacle of dirt of every description. Small shanties face the court on both sides, old and weather-beaten, but swarming with inhabitants, to say nothing of the vermin which a close inspection would undoubtedly reveal. Half a dozen curs lay stretched on the cobblestone pavement and they had no sooner noticed our friend when they ran towards him, betraying an ardent desire of making the closer acquaintance of his calves only deterred by various vigorous kicks, from carrying this desire into successful execution. Several dozen children of both sexes and all ages peopled the court, with features so thickly coated with dirt as to prevent the visitor from judging of their comeliness. Richard's nose battled vigorously, but his love of man conquered and he cautiously wended his way between the wondering children. Some of them ran to tell their mothers, and soon every door in the court was lined with curious women, who studied the stranger with lively interest until he said pleasantly: "Good morning folks. I come to see whether you have anything to do for me. How are the scissors? Dull enough to ride to Halifax on?"

"Don't know, Surr: Supposin' you try and let's know? Only twenty-five cents a ride, Surr."

A sally of laughter awarded this attempt at wit. Nothing dismayed, our friend replied: "Well fetch the horse out, mother. If it is as sharp as your wit I won't try."

Again a laugh. The woman resumed. "It ain't though.

The baby tried to cut the cat's tail with it and nary a bit would it work."

"Well, fetch her out, nevertheless. Here is the doctor for such patients."

"But there's no money for the medicine. We're broke, we are."

"Never mind, ma'am. I havn't the chance of working for such a beauty every day, so I'll do the job for nothing." This created a louder laugh than before, for the party in question was a toothless crone of at least sixty-five, and not overburdened with beauty. But if she was not handsome, she was good-natured and clever.

"Just wait, me hearty," she cried with a grin; "I'll go to fetch her, and if yer do the job well, yer shall have a kiss."

This turned the laugh on Richard, who hastened to reply: "A thousand thanks, madam; but being a tee-totaller, I must decline."

A minute later the scissors were handed to him, and he proceeded to sharpen them. When he had finished, he looked around and said: "I don't know how soon I'll meet such a fair crowd again, so I'll make the best of it, and sharpen all the scissors you can raise. Who'll be next? I see it is just eleven and I'll devote the next hour to the service of the fair sex."

As the people saw he was in earnest they ran laughing into their houses, bringing forth scissors of all sizes, which he sharpened with due zeal, saying a pleasant word to the owners, who thought it a capital joke, and the joker a capital fellow. He was very nearly through when there was a sudden commotion in the crowd around him, the women scampering off in all directions, and some of them crying: "It is Jim Murphy, and drunk he is." Richard looked around and discovered at the distance of half a dozen feet, a man more disgusting than formidable, although his sinewy neck and his sledge hammer fists betrayed no ordinary strength. Richard did not fear him, because he had no cause for fear, and the look he cast at him showed more curiosity than anything else. The

man was pock-marked. His hair was of a fiery red and his face showed half a dozen scars, by no means calculated to increase the attraction of a face naturally ugly. His brow was knit, and his eyes scowled in a manner hardly calculated to make a more intimate acquaintance desirable. His clothes were not only dirty, but ragged to such an extent as to create the fear in the beholder of seeing them drop from his body.

"What are you doing here?" he asked with a snarl, when he caught Richard's eye. Our friend saw that he was under the influence of liquor, although not sufficiently to deprive him of the use of his limbs. Not wishing to provoke a person in this condition, he replied good naturally: "I have been sharpening the scissors of these ladies; but being through, I'll say good bye to you."

"Yes," you better vamoose. Have been making love to the ould woman, I reckon. Off with you, or I'll give you a start. Do ye hear?"

With these words he advanced, giving the grinding apparatus such vicious a kick as to send it spinning, and breaking the stone. Richard was in a dilemma. He wished to visit these premises again, with the view of improving the condition of the inmates and elevating them intellectually, if they would let him; but he knew at the same time that these people despised cowardice, and he would lose all his prestige with them if he showed the white feather. So it was really more for their sake than his own, that he resolved to resist further aggressions on the part of this bully. He gave him a vigorous push, which caused him to reel back, and said sternly: "No more of this, sir, if you please."

Jim Murphy evidently had not expected this. He was probably so used to seeing his surroundings crouch before his threats and commands, that he considered any resistance to his orders not only preposterous, but impossible.

An angry red flushed his face; he clinched his hands into formidable fists and said, advancing once more: "And 'tis for a foight ye be spoilin. Well, ye can be accomerdated, me hardy."

Richard saw that he was really in for a fight; so he resolved to make it both short and decisive, and when Jim was near enough he made several feints and then gave his assailant so telling a blow on his left eye that he reeled back with the certain prospects of losing the vision of that organ of sight for the next twenty-four hours. Jim for a moment was immensely surprised, but this sensation was mild in comparison with the wrath which filled his virtuous heart afterwards. He uttered an inarticulate howl of rage, then lowering his bulky head like a battering ram, he rushed towards our friend with the evident intention of closing with him. Richard saw this. He remained at his place just long enough to let his foe imagine the successful issue of this ruse. Then he sprang aside suddenly and with the rapidity of lightning landed so terrible a left hander on the fellow's temple that he fell to the ground with a heavy thud.

Richard had remained perfectly cool, and no sooner had he put his adversary "hors du combat," than his heart was filled with compassion. He stooped over the unconscious body to ascertain the extent of his injuries, and for a moment was really afraid of having hurt him more permanently than he had intended. While thus examining him he was joined by a pale middle aged woman who knelt at his side and felt for his pulse.

"He isn't dead, I trust?" Richard inquired anxiously.

"Indeed, and he ain't. It would take a worser thrashin' nor this to kill Jim Murphy."

"Does he belong to you, madam?"

"He is me husband, yer honor, and sorry it is I am for his bein it."

"I am sorry I was forced into this disgraceful row."

"Ye needn't excuse yerself, Surr. We all seed as how he bullied you. May be 'tis a lesson as will teach him better the next toime."

"He is coming to. Let me assist you in getting him into the house. Steady now, here you go."

With the exertion of all his strength Richard raised the man first into a sitting posture and then to his feet.

"Lean on me, sir," he said kindly, leading the bewildered bully in the direction his wife indicated. They entered a squalid room and lowered the patient on a ragged bed in a corner. Then Richard drew a dollar from his pocket, slipped it into the woman's hand and whispered: "Get some arnica and make bandages for his eye and temple; I'll call to-morrow and see how he is."

"And may the Howly Mother bless you," the woman cried, accompanying these words with a look truly eloquent. Then she led him to the court, where his former patrons had reassembled to discuss the exciting episode and its merits. It was evident from the character of their remarks that the chastisement he had inflicted on Mr. Murphy had raised him immensely in their estimation, much more, in fact, than any words or arguments could have done. Murphy evidently was no favorite, and the lesson Richard had taught him created a satisfaction as great as universal. Nor did his wife form an exception. Her neighbors probably suffered only now and then from his drunkenness and meddlesome spirit; but his wife evidently endured an uninterrupted martyrdom to judge from her haggard looks and woe-begone expression. When Richard reached the court he found his apparatus righted and the damage repaired, excepting of course, the broken grindstone, whose restoration was beyond the power of these rude, but kind-hearted people. As he approached, one of them said apologetically: "And it is sorry, indade, we are, to see ye thus traited. It is a shame, it is, the way Mister Murphy traited ye, and it is Mrs. Murphy hersilf as is sorry."

"Oh, never mind, good people," Richard said cheerily, "A little cement will make that fracture all right. I am only sorry I can't finish your scissors now; but if you will have patience, friends, I will use some idle hour to sharpen not only your scissors, but mend your pots and kettles in the bargain."

"And sure, 'tis the loike of you to do such kind acts,"

cried the spokeswoman; "may all the saints be with yez and take you from the purgatory in a whiffy."

This benevolent wish created laughter and applause, in the midst of which our friend withdrew from the court. He was surprised that the news of the encounter had spread all over the neighborhood, and at first amused, but then seriously annoyed at finding himself a hero in consequence. "There is human nature for you," he soliloquized. "I might spend months and years in earnest endeavors to improve you, and remain unnoticed and unappreciated. But here I teach a brutal sot manners, and I am noted and admired."

It was really too bad, and our friend is surely excusable in forming a poor idea of some traits of human characters. His reflections, however, were merely transitory, so we will pass them by, and record his next steps. After leaving the court he turned in the direction of the grocery, both his watch and stomach indicating to the nearness of noon: but when a woman stopped him on the way, asking him to sharpen some scissors and knives for her, he stopped to express his regret of being unable to accommodate her on account of the breaking of his stone. "Ah, you are the man that whipped Jim Murphy," she said, with a lively interest. "He is a holy terror, he is, and I am glad you taught him a lesson."

"He seems to have but a few friends in the neighborhood. I wonder he is allowed to bluff an entire community in this manner."

"Friends? I should say, not even counting his poor wife, whom he beats as regularly as the sun rises. You say you wonder he ain't stopped? Well, it *is* a wonder. They say he is powerfully strong and a terrible fighter. I wonder you beat him, you don't look extra strong."

"Well looks are sometimes deceptive, madam."

"So they be. Are you comin this way soon? If so I'll wait for you as I have a good deal of grinding and mending to do."

"I'll be 'round this afternoon; but tell me madam, do you know who owns that court?"

"Dennis Court, you mean? Yes it is owned by a rich Irishman across the street, here; O'Flannigan is his name."

"He don't seem to have the wellfare of his tenants much at heart madam, the way the buildings look."

"He? Of course, he hain't. All he cares for is the rent."

"Do you know whether the property could be bought?"

"I know it could, in fact, it has been in the market a good while but nobody seems to want it, probably because the rent is so low and uncertain. I *do* wish somebody would buy it to make a decent place of it. It is a real nuisance and a disgrace to the neighborhood."

Richard thanked the lady and proceeded on his way. A new idea had risen in his mind. Was it not his duty, in fact, not a part of his plan to take an interest in these rude and uncouth, but clever and kind hearted people? If so, how were they best to be reached? He had half a million of his phonograph money left, and wondered whether it would not be a good idea to invest a portion of it in the purchase and improvement of Dennis Court? These thoughts still filled his mind when he reached the grocery, causing him to be so taciturn as to evoke Sophie's question, whether anything had gone amiss that morning?

This reminded him of his encounter with worthy Jim, and he proceeded to give his friends a graphic account of the combat. Next, he told them his thoughts concerning his duty to these poor foreigners, asking their opinion of the matter.

"For my part," said Sophie earnestly, "I think the Irish are as good as other folks. They don't always pay very well but I reckon that is because they hain't no money."

"That's exactly my opinion," joined in Gottlieb. "The Irish are a little– a little—well a little untidy, but they are good-hearted like big children, and always ready to help you when they can."

"That settles it. Gottlieb, do you think we could cement my grind stone?"

"It is emery, sir, so I don't know; but then we can try."

"We will try. Do you know where the cement bottle is?"

Sophie produced a small phial containing a label to the effect that this cement would cement all breaks, including broken hearts, on which recommendation Richard applied it to the broken grind stone. For once the label had told the truth, or at least a part of the truth. Richard having no opportunity just then to test its assertion as to hearts. A little after one the last trace of the feud had disappeared, and Richard set out to meet the party that had so many tools to grind and so many pots and kettles to mend. He found her at home and was soon busily engaged in restoring her property to its original beauty and usefulness. She sat by, gazing at his work and plying her tongue at the same time.

"Do you know madam," Richard chimed in at a break, "what Mr. O'Flannigan would take for his court?"

"I did know. Let me see, I think it was fifty thousand, but Ben thinks it could be bought for forty-five."

"Who is Ben?"

"Oh, my old man, you know. He and Mr. O'Flannigan are cronies, so Ben ought to know. But you don't think of buying yourself, do you?"

"I! A poor tinker? Well, that's rich."

"Then you know of a customer, do you?"

"That's more likely. A fellow wants to make a penny whenever he can, you know."

"Ah, it is a commission you are after? Well, Mr. O'Flannigan lives in that fine brick house across from here and if you will call there you can find out all about it."

It took Richard a full hour to finish the job, and when he was done both parties were pleased, he with the new dollar he slipped in his pocket; she with the handsome countenance, the good manners, and finally the satisfactory execution of the work. Richard went straight for Mr. O'Flannigan's house. He rang the bell which was answered by a very small fellow, whose fat, however, made up for his shortness. His little eyes were half hidden by the layers of fat under them, but Richard perceived that they glittered with an avaricious fire.

"Any work for me, boss?" Richard inquired carelessly.

The other measured him, and was on the point of denying when a certain recollection seemed to strike him.

"Several of my butcher knives are dull, as well as some hatchets. What do ye charge?"

"Let me see and I will tell you."

The man led the way into a small shop and the laying tools in question in a heap, asked shortly:

"Well, how much?"

"Fifty cents."

"Give you forty. Is it a bargain?"

"It is," replied Richard, depositing his apparatus, and beginning operations. "Pretty well fixed, 'Squire," he remarked, after a while. "Your own property, I reckon?"

"I should think so. I own this house and the next five and mighty good property they be."

"You own the court too, they tell me."

"I does, and mighty poor property it be, too. Haven't drawn a dollar rent this month."

"Too bad. Why don't you sell?"

"Can't. It seems nobody wants the darned court."

"How much do you ask for it?"

"Want to buy?" Mr. O'Flannigan inquired, the glitter of his eyes increasing visably.

"Not myself, of course, but I know a rich chap that might bite, if I present the matter in a favorable light."

"Tell you what I'll do. Make it all right with you. Wouldn't mind a dollar or two."

"Very generous, indeed," said Richard, laughing; "but you havn't given me the figures yet."

"Well," replied the butcher, who began to regret that he had decried his own property. "The sight is illigent, you know, and—"

"I understand all that," Richard replied cooly. "It is the amount I wish to know."

"Eggsactly," said the fat man, wiping his brow. "I

am coming to that. It is fifty thousand dollars, I'll take for the court, and nary cent less."

"Here are your tools, sir," said Richard, getting ready for a start. "Thank you, sir, I trust you will give me your trade. Good bye to you."

"Stop a moment, if you please. You hain't given me you friend's name yet."

"Hadn't the intention, sir. Fifty thousand is too much, and 'tis no use to tell my friend either, for I know he wouldn't bite at that."

"Well, at what figure would he bite, then? I want to get the pesky court off my hands, and if you make me any ways a decent offer, I shall accept."

"Now you talk business. What do you think of forty-five cash?"

The butcher hesitated a moment, then he said: "It's a bargain, sir. Where can I see your friend?"

"You can't see him at all, as he is not in the city, but I'll bring you a lady who attends to his business for him."

"When will you bring her?"

"This afternoon, if that suits you."

It suited Mr. O'Flannigan very well, so Richard left the shop, and made directly for the Velder mansion. Here he expressed his desire to see Mrs. Kean. She invited him in, and asked him what he wanted as soon as they were alone. He told her, adding: "Aunt Laura, here is a field of home mission for you, or rather for somebody whom you will please select. First and foremost we'll have to fight the filth and squallor of the place, for with such a powerful ally, Old Harry would be invincible. But of that another time. Can you spare me half an hour, to close the bargain?"

"Readily and cheerfully. It is not far to the place, so we may as well walk."

"No, aunty, a real lady does not lower herself by walking with a common tinker. Besides I want you to impress the butcher by the grandeur of your style."

"Then you will not accompany me?"

"I think I had better not. You close the bargain at forty-five thousand, and invite the butcher to the office to receive his money, as soon as he has complied with all due formalities. I must make some more calls this afternoon to earn my supper, you know."

Again it must suffice to state that the court was purchased, to the consternation of its tenants, who feared to get from the frying pan into the fire, a fear well justified by the general tenor of the landlords.

CHAPTER XII.

DRAINING A HUMAN SWAMP.

Early the next morning as Richard was passing Dennis Court he made it a point to walk in and knock at Murphy's door, which was opened by Mrs. Murphy in person. A bright smile passed over her worn features and she said eagerly: "And it is really ye, Misther Brown? It is real glad I am to see you."

"And how is Mr. Murphy?"

"'Tis kind in you to ask, surr. Jim be quite comfortable loike, and would loike to see you, surr."

She turned and Richard followed her to the squalid room of yesterday, and saw his antagonist stretched on the bundle of rags, honored with the name of bed. Jim was sober now, but his right eye was still closed, and the color of the rainbow adorned that part of his face which had come in contact with Richard's fist. The man raised himself slightly on one elbow as he saw Richard enter, and said very humbly: "And sure Mr. Brown, it's very kind in ye to visit the loikes of me. She tells me as I acted very ugly to ye yesterday."

"Well, you were under the fumes of liquor, Mr. Murphy, so we will say nothing more about it. How do you feel this morning?"

"Better than I deserve, surr. The owld woman got the

doctor stuff ye speak about, and it has helped me a powerful sight. Hang me, if ever I forget the kindness you have showed me, surr."

"Well, some of that kindness was rather rough, Mr. Murphy."

"Don't misther me, surr. Its Jim to my friend surr."

"All right, then, Jim."

"That's more loike it. Rather rough, ye were sayin? Well hardly rough enough for a fellow who allows liquor to get the better of him."

"And beats his wife when he is full" said Richard sternly. "See here, Jim, I just want to say one word to you. You say I am your friend. Well, then I *will* be a friend to you, and do for you all I can. But if I ever hear that you strike this good woman again I'll come and give you such a threshing that all the arnica in the world won't help you. Mind, I mean exactly what I say."

And Jim *did* mind it. He was one of those natures which you cannot bend, but which you can break. He knew himself to be a powerful man and no mean fighter, and the ease and rapidity with which Richard had laid him out had secured in his rough nature a respect bordering on affection. We do not wish to paint him as a pattern, and when we say that he felt towards our friend much like the mastiff who licks his master's hand that chastised him, we do not wish to intimate that we consider this the highest type of our race. Richard understood him instinctively, and had chosen his words accordingly. He raised his hand entreatingly, crying. "Don't now, Misther Brown, I'll never do it again, least ways, not if I can help it. Ye must not be too hard on a poor fellow, and help him a little to fight against his owl inimy."

"That I will, Jim. I'll help you by giving you work. It is the idle man, you know, that's ready for all sorts of mischief."

"And 'tis the truth, ye speak there, Mister Brown," Mrs. Murphy interposed. "When Jim has work he is all right, but

when he loafs, and gits in with them rum sops, he kicks the traces."

"Well, we'll keep him straight, Mrs. Murphy, trust me for that. He has promised to let you alone. If he breaks that promise you just come to me, and say a word, and then he'll discover that I, for my part, am good at keeping mine. Now, good bye. I'll call again in a day or two and give Jim a job."

Mrs. Murphy told her neighbors afterwards, that she was really as feared of Misther Brown, as of His Riverence, a pretty strong expression for a devout Catholic, considering that His Riverence holds the keys to heaven and paradise.

As Richard stepped into the court, he saw the entire population of that choice spot huddled together. A dozen tongues rattled at the same time, but when Richard's form became visible in the door every voice was hushed, making the silence almost painful. As the young man approached the motley group, the old woman who had joked with him the day before, took courage, and said, after a deep obeisance: "The top of a good mornin' to ye, Mr. Brown."

"The same to you all. Can I do anything for you?"

"Well, yis. We heard, as how ye had bought this court, surr."

"Well, a very particular friend has bought it. What of it?"

"Well, Misther Brown, we all heared, as you, he would turn us all into the street, surr."

"Tell those who said this that it is a base lie."

"The Howly Virgin bless him. I tould them so. Sez I to them: 'And is it Misther Brown's friend as would do so mane a thing? Indade and double; a man loike Misther Brown has dacent friends, that's what I said.'"

"And you were right, madam."

"So we can stay on and won't have the rint raised neither?"

"The rent will not be raised, but you will have to move a while because Mr. Velder intends putting up better houses with all modern improvements."

"But when the houses are built he'll double the rint on us?"

"Fear nothing, good people. My friend says he will not charge you more for the new houses than Mr. O'Flannigan did for the old ones, and I know that he will not break his word."

"Three chairs for Misther Brown's friend."

When the noise had subsided the crone inquired: "But Misther Brown where will we go until the new houses are finished?"

Never before had Richard been so deeply impressed with the utter helplessness of these big children. Like children; they manage pretty well, as long as the regular daily task is set for them. But if the slightest obstacle presents itself, they cry for mamma, or somebody else having charge of them, huddling together like sheep threatened by the wolf. Richard saw plainly that it would be folly to ask or expect them to provide for the rising emergency, but while he recognized their helplessness and the necessity of taking matters in his own hand, he also resolved that greater self-reliance should be one of the first lessons taught them.

"Now listen, friends," he said earnestly and impressively "you surely don't expect Mr. Velder, or rather Mrs. Kean, who attends to his business, to hunt you lodgings, while he builds you new houses. That would be a little too presumptuous, would it not?"

"But you see Misther Brown, 'tis out of the rinting season, and where would the loikes of us find a house as is vaicant?"

"Well, I'll tell Mrs. Kean, but I doubt very much whether she can or will take the trouble of hunting lodgings for you. I have not the time to discuss the matter now, but advise you kindly, as your friend, to go to work without delay, and secure new lodgings, for from what I learn, Mrs. Kean intends to have these houses pulled down at once. As to me, I am only a tinker you know, but I'll tell you what I will do. I'll give a fine new cooking stove to the first one that moves, and a bran new bedstead with spring mattress to the second."

These words proved truly magic. The commotion which

came into the crowd was much like that of a multitude of mice or rats penned up in a box and suddenly shaken out. Women ran here, and women ran there. Some rushed to the houses to secure the indispensible sun bonnet, while others were actually roused to such a pitch of frenzy as to disregard even this respect for the goddess of fashion, a diety ruling as absolute in the hut as in the palace. Richard laughed until the tears rolled over his cheeks. He did not go, however, as he had at first intended, forseeing that the decision would be forthcoming in a very short time, and that the fiat of an impartial umpire might, nay *would*, be necessary to determine the merits of the contestants. While the mothers were out hunting, the junior members of the families commenced lugging the household goods into the court; showing conclusively that the apprehension of not finding lodgings had either been a fictitious one, or changed suddenly into a feeling of confidence and assurance. Richard was still pondering this new trait of human nature, when a cart came rattling into the court, drawn by a rather extenuated nag, and tenanted by our crone and her husband, who was the lucky owner of this elegant rig, plying the vocation of a carter. A shout of indignation on the part of the others arose, answered by one of defiance on the part of the couple in the cart, who hastened to leave it with commendable speed, and began piling their furniture in a manner so reckless as to threaten destruction to anything frail and perishable, features fortunately unknown to their belongings. In less than fifteen minutes the goods were on board, and with a whoop of delight and defiance the worthy carter and his spouse drove from the court. However, there was a second premium to be earned; so the other people continued to lug their goods from the houses. By this time several of the mothers began to return, showing in their miens whether they had been successful or not. Their faces offered a rich field for study, and Richard was really curious to see the outcome of his experiment. Suddenly a new idea lit up the features of one of the dames. She whispered a few words into the ears of her half grown daughter and then Rich-

ard saw the entire bevy rush upon the pile of goods belonging to them with a frenzy both ludricrous and dangerous to anything not made of solid iron. There were seven or eight in the family, and when each one had loaded him or herself with a parcel up to or rather beyond their strength, the pile on the ground had disappeared. They began a hasty retreat from the court, and the others, who, by this time had discovered the motive of the schemers, sent up such a howl of rage as to create the apprehension of a hand to hand encounter. In fact, it is highly probable, that hostilities would have broken out, if Richard's presence had not kept the beligerents in check. Nor was it moral suasion which prevented the feud, but the determined front he made to the hostile factivity. Collaring several urchins who tried to trip the carriers, he jerked them back and said sternly: "Hands off. Everything is fair in war."

"But she hain't no house to go to, she hain't," protested one of the women.

"That is her business, not yours or mine. I did not offer the premiums for finding a house, but for vacating these."

So the ingenious woman was allowed to carry off her booty without hindrance, and the others were too good natured to indulge long in an indignation so unfair and so useless. However, when some of the women saw that they had failed in securing the coveted prize, they made mien to carry the furniture back to the premises. This provoked Richard, who had made continuous studies of the traits of these people. He had prevented a fight, but he had also seen that only his peremptory "beware," had hindered it. Nor did he doubt that the feud would have been both relentless and severe, showing the brutality of these untutored creatures which rank only a few steps above the savage in the gratification of their passions. Secondly he had discovered that only material benefits were capable of inducing mental and subsequently physical exertions, while stubborness and spitefulness were very apt to follow disappointment.

"Hallo!" he cried, loud enough to attract universal attention. "I see some of you are carrying your duds back to the house. Of course, you can do as you please and you might say that it isn't my business; but you may rest assured that I may report the names of those that do to Mrs. Kean, who will be very apt to exclude them from the list of tenants for the new houses."

He turned to go, but was stopped by the guilty parties who assured him that they had only meant to put the furniture back to keep it from spoiling in the sun, and that they would leave as soon as they had found a shelter. On examination Richard found that some of these families were without a penny, and could actually not raise enough money to pay the drayman. So he said:

"I know it is foolish in me to strengthen your improvidence in this manner, but as I have been instrumental in depriving you of your homes, I'll help you moving. My friend, the grocer has a horse and spring wagon which I can and will borrow, to move those of you who can and will secure lodgings right away."

With these words he left them, declining with something like annoyance the profuse exclamation of gratitude they showered upon him. As he passed the shop of Mr. Stitch, that individual stopped him, saying:

"Say, Mr. Tinker, hain't you got some more of those dokiments? My neighbors have read them all to pieces, and are clamoring for more."

"Glad to hear it. Here is all I have with me. When they are gone you can have more."

"Don't be in a rush, now, friend. I want to ask a question or two."

"Fire away, then."

"Well, you see we have talked the matter over, and come to the concloosion that your ideas ain't so very bad, that it

would be well for us to form a branch order. What do you say to that?"

"It is a capital idea; but I knew you would come to that sooner or later."

"How did you know, now? When you gave me these papers, I hadn't any more idea of doing such a thing than to fly to the moon."

"How I knew? Because your head is level, that's why."

We all have our share of vanity, a very good and proper thing to have by the way, as vanity makes us aim to be at betterment and improvement. Mr. Stitch was pleased to see so desirable a quantity of his head acknowledged by a stranger and went on: "Now the question arises, will this thing be costly? I ain't a miser, you must know; but business is dull, and none of us have any money to throw away just now."

"I know. Well, there need be no expenses at the start. You might meet at the houses of the members in turn, and—"

"I hardly think that would do. I feel sure that we'll commence with fifty members and have no doubt that that number will be doubled as soon as we are fairly organized."

"You surprise and gladden me, Mr. Stitch. Well, in that case, we'll have to think of something else. To tell you in confidence: I have a wealthy patron, who shares these views, and will do much to advance them. I'll sound him on the question of buying or renting some big hall, and report the next time I meet you. Farewell."

This was news indeed. Fifty members from the start, and probably small merchants or master mechanics, that is, the most conservative of the element of the nation. If they opened their eyes and minds to truth, what might be expected from the more radical working men? Truly, this was good news. But how should he meet these demands? As yet his means were sufficient for all emergencies, but if the cause grew at this rate it would not take many months to ebb the treasury. He foresaw the necessity of taxing the adherents of the new gospel at an early date. Nor would this be dif-

ficult after the movement was fairly under way, and the enthusiasm of number and success had been produced. At present, however, he would have to subsidize the newly fledged societies and was still pondering on the best mode of aiding them when he reached the grocery. Dinner was ready to be placed upon the table, and on Richard's arrival, Sophie called the members of the household to the dining room. These meals served as informal meetings, at which the various committees made their reports, offered suggestions or debated questions. This time Richard gave a graphic description of the scenes in Dennis Court, which caused much merriment, and also some philosophical deductions. Next our friend reported the communications of the tailor, which were received with approbation and created considerable enthusiasm. When Richard said: "Now, what had we better do in this matter? That is, how can we best secure a hall, where this order and many others likely to spring into existence in the next months, may assemble?"

Duncan replied, "I think I know. Did you notice the large three story building on Bloome street, corner of thirteenth?"

"Exactly. It was built by a socialistic association to which I belonged, and whose enthusiasm was greater than its prudence or its purse. The association became bankrupt and the building was taken by a bank in satisfaction of a mortgage. It is not adapted for business or lodgings, and the bank, therefore, desirous of disposing of the property."

"Do you know its value?"

"I know its cost, which is $40,000, not including the lot which cost our association five thousand more. I understand the bank lent $35,000 on the property and will take that sum for it."

"Well, let us investigate the matter. The building is sufficiently central and large enough to serve as a gymnasium, armory, &c., &c."

"Armory. Why, Richard, you intend playing soldier?"

It was Mrs. Duncan who asked this question. Richard

hesitated a moment, then said: "Alice, I need not tell you that a prudent general keeps his guns and ammunition in order, not to provoke war, but to prevent it. I will not conceal from you the necessities of preparing hostile attacks on the part of our adversaries. They even now talk of the insufficiency of our military forces, the unreliability of the militia and the necessity of subduing socialistic ideas by the bayonet. It is therefore my intention to organize our forces and drill them to a state of efficiency. In that way, and that way *alone*, can we foil the intrigues of our foes, and preserve peace and prosperity in the nation." Alice nodded, her intelligence showing her the wisdom of Richard's preparations. Our friend continued: "I have promised my Irish clients to move them this afternoon, for which purpose I want to borrow your wagon, Gottlieb. Duncan is too busy with his umbrella covers, to loaf, so we have only Alice to fall back upon."

"Fall back upon?" she inquired with well feigned alarm.

"Fall gracefully, then Richard, for I have not the constitution of your clients of Dennis Court."

"I learned the art of dancing, Alice, so fear nothing. Besides, the work in store for you is light and genteel. Indeed Mrs. Kean's carriage is at your disposal to execute it. Sophie says that she complains of her horses getting too wild from too much oats and little work. So, if you will go to the livery stable and order Mrs. Kean's carriage to be gotten ready, you can drive down town to execute your mission."

"That is tempting. But what am I to do down town?"

"Simply to call at the bank and ascertain whether the hall in question is still for sale, and, if so, at what price."

"Can't Sophie go with me? I know she would like the drive."

"Of course, she and Fay. Will you go?"

"Certainly and with pleasure; but where is the bank?"

Duncan gave the necessary information, and then all dispersed to their afternoon's work. When Richard reached the Court with his vehicle, he found several parties ready to remove to the quarter they had secured. As stated before the

possessions of these poor people were scant and a very few hours sufficed to domicile the entire population in their new lodgings. Towards evening Mr. Wurzel appeared, sent by Mrs. Kean to survey the premises and give his advice to the mode of remodeling the court. These European engineers receive a much more general education than those of Occidentia, and Richard had, therefore, no doubts that Wurzel would be able to plan and superintend the rebuilding of the court. When he arrived Richard had finished his work, and on the invitation of the engineer, accompanied him all over the premises. On exact measurement the length of Dennis Court proved to be one hundred and sixty feet, while its entire width was one hundred and thirty. In obedience to Mrs. Kean's wishes Wurzel began with the sewers, which he soon declared as totally insufficient and miserably constructed.

"I do not see where the city officials had their eyes when they accepted these sewers."

"I do. They had them in their pockets to enjoy the eagles slipped there by interested contractors."

"You are probably right. Well, they must be rebuilt, Mr. Velder does not want to see his tenants decimated by diphtheria one of these days. These Irish must be tough, or they couldn't have stood it so long. It will be a heavy bill to foot, though."

"I don't think Mr. Velder will mind that."

"Of course he won't; but he has many irons in the fire you know, so we must be as economical as we can, in consistency with decency."

Next the buildings were examined. They consisted of brick, all of which could be used a second time when cleaned.

"Here is a job for all these Paddies," said Richard, with a smile.

"Yes, Mrs. Kean has ordered me to employ them to the best of their and my ability. Supposing you act as mediator? You have an excellent knack of treating these people."

Richard consented and was on the point of informing his

clients of their good fortune when two woman approached him, hanging their heads and acting a difference totally foreign to their nature. Richard looked at them inquiringly, saying merely: "Well, my ladies?"

Then one pretended to gather courage, saying: "Misther Brown, we two be the ones as gained—gained the premises you know?"

"The what?"

"The stove and the bedstead, you know."

"Ah, yes. And you would like to have them now would you?"

"Well, we is fixin' up the new lodgings loike, and ef it suits your honor—"

"Of course it does. Jump in girls."

The girls exchanged one glance of delight, then of exultation with their less lucky sisters and were whirled away to select the one a stove, the other a fancy bedstead, in accordance with their own and individual tastes. We need hardly add that the bedstead was of a fiery red, and the stove of a company's capacity, the happy owner being the mother of sixteen healthy children, possessed of an astonishing capacity for storing eatables.

When Richard returned to Dennis Court, the male portion of the former tenants had gathered in groups before the doors. Working hours were nearly over, and curiosity had induced them to quit a little before the usual time. When Richard walked up to Mr. Wurzel, who was awaiting his return, the men crowded around them eager to hear what kind of a job they might expect. Seeing his friend Murphy among them, Richard said: "Good evening, Jim, I am glad to see you again. Are you ready to commence work to-morrow?"

"And shure, I be, Misther Brown. May I be so bold as to ask what wurk ye have for the loike of me?"

"Yes, Jim. We want you and your friends to pull down the old houses, and then clean the bricks."

"And what is it, a man can earn that way, surr?"

"I hardly know, Jim. What do you generally earn a day when engaged in such work?"

"A dollar and a half to a dollar, seventy-five."

"That seems reasonable enough. Well, Mrs. Kean is a very fair-minded lady and will do what is right. But she expects you to do your duty as well. So you see it rests with you to get paying work for quite a while. Are all you gentlemen ready to commence work to-morrow morning at $1.75 per day?"

"We be, surr," was the unanimous reply.

"Very well, then. Mr. Wurzel is going to boss this job for Mrs. Kean, but as he does not speak your language quite fluently as I, he has requested me to engage you for him. I want you to understand that you are here on your good behavior. We will pay first-class wages for good work, but shall tolerate neither idleness nor drunkenness. Mr. Wurzel is fully able to manage the job, but I will add that I shall be around every day, and that I am prepared to back any order he may see proper to issue."

On the following morning the dismantling of the houses began. The rubbish was at once carted away, and the wood given to the children of the workers, who carried it off for fire wood. The bricks were cleaned and piled up in the yard, leaving sufficient room to pass by. When all the debris had been removed, Mrs. Kean visited the vacant lot and handed Mr. Wurzel the plans and specifications he had drawn up for her inspection, saying:

"I feel sure that they would have Mr. Velder's approval so you may proceed."

Accordingly, the engineer caused his force to excavate the soil at the right and left extremities of the lot, going to nearly the depth of the sewers of the neighboring streets. Next he constructed a sewer in these trenches, giving it sufficient fall for drainage.

These sewers were prolonged into the main sewer, and the closets themselves provided with water and all modern improvements, to deprive the tenants of every excuse of fall-

ing back into their former filthy habits. Smaller sewers were laid from every kitchen to the larger ones and provided with the same water pressure and other improvements, Richard being particularly anxious to wean his proteges from habits which had become a second nature, and therefore clung to them as tightly as their skin. When this underground work was done, Wurzel began the construction of dry and spacious cellars, in front of which a coal vault was erected, allowing this useful mineral to be shoveled in from the front. The new houses were placed fully ten feet further back than the old ones, making the court in front of them thirty-five feet wide. There were twelve in all, six on each side, placed in pairs, with a three foot walk between them. In that way light and air had free access on all sides, making the houses not only more cheerful, but more healthful. They consisted of two stories, and contained six rooms each. As they possessed a depth of forty feet, ample space was left behind them for a little garden or at least court, according to the taste of the inmates. The far end was closed by a solid two-story brick building, running the entire width, but containing an arched gateway in the center, to mediate the access to the street beyond. This building was intended for various purposes. Both wings contained spacious basements, in one of which a boiler was placed to create steam. The left wing was fitted up for a laundry, with all modern improvements and appliances, and the right one, for a public kitchen, that is, a place where meals could be secured, but not eaten. Richard had discussed his intentions with Mrs. Kean in all their bearings, and not only secured in her an able, but truly enthusiastic executrix of his plans. She called frequently at the Court while the houses were in course of construction, and also at the temporary homes of her future clients. In this way she became thoroughly familiar, not only with the premises, but with the people. This familiarity enabled her to choose from the women those qualified and inclined to assist her in her work of reformation. She found in Mrs. Murphy a woman of superior character and intelligence. It was wonderful to see the

change which kindness and firmness combined had wrought in her husband and, through him, in her. He was no longer the sot that had rolled in the gutter day after day, but worked with a zest highly grateful to his and our friend. Richard had looked for an occasional relapse, and there were indeed moments of terrible temptation. At such moments Jim pursued the wise policy of seeking the aid of Richard, who was too wise to put him off with mere advice. He took him on such occasions to Mrs. Murphy, saying: "Here is Jim, thirsty as a louse. Give him a good horn. He has been a good fellow, and deserves a little recreation. And now, Mrs. Murphy, you take him for a ride in the country, on the railway; I'll foot the bill." And off the two toted, blessing him both aloud and in their hearts always returning with new hopes and new strength to fight the battle of life, and with their own passions. We may as well state here, that when the Court was finished and ready to receive its tenants, Jim was appointed engineer and fireman, a trust which did not only make him proud, but gave him that self reliance needed to complete his reform. True, he occasionally went to Mother Murphy for a little eye opener, as he called it, but a more strictly temperate man than Jim Murphy could not be found on the premises. Jim had also the chance of keeping the Court in trim, and to prevent the mischievous urchins from committing nuisance. We know that they stood in awe of him, but the bully had disappeared with the drunkard, and though he was strict in the discharge of his duty, he displayed a gentleness of temper and manners marvelous to those who had known him before. To Mrs. Murphy, on the other hand, was given the supervision of the laundry. Mrs. Kean learned that she had formerly worked long and successfully in similar establishments, and finding her not only tidy and scrupulous in her work, but also possessed of the needful authority to manage inferiors in rank, had resolved to make her superintendent of the new establishment. In anticipation of the new industry, Mrs. Kean had selected a dozen volunteers from the female forces of the Court and subjected them to a thorough training of

their future duties. They were sent to other laundries, on small pay, or as mere supernumeraries, Mrs. Kean, meanwhile, supplying their wants. When the laundry opened, most of them were ready for efficient work, and those lacking in skill at that time, were given a chance to perfect themselves. The laundry soon won, or rather rightfully earned, the reputation of doing good work at reasonable rates, thus securing a trade which kept everybody astir, and soon taxed it to its utmost capacity. The same thing can be said of the public kitchen. At first, Mrs. Kean had been at a loss as to a proper head for this establishment, knowing full well that both skill in the art of cookery and the utmost cleanliness are necessary to gain and keep the confidence of the public. She knew full well that the ladies of Dennis Court excelled in neither of these virtues, and was therefore compelled to look outside for a proper head. It was then that Richard learned by incident, that the parents of Alice had formerly kept a restaurant, and that she had aided in the kitchen for several years. When Richard broached the subject of the kitchen, and asked her whether she felt inclined to assume the management of the establishment, she replied with a voice half choked with emotion: "Richard, what I have I owe to you. You know I would lay down my life for you, How, then, can you doubt that I will aid you, and aid you cheerfully in your work?"

He made a deprecating gesture, saying: "Alice, you overestimate the little service I was fortunate enough to render you. I do not wish you to put your consent on this basis. It is hard work, and if your inclination does not run that way I want you to tell me."

"But it *does* run that way, Richard, and I shall be only *too* glad to aid the cause in this manner. However, I am a little rusty in the culinary art, and would like to brush up in the kitchen of some hotel or restaurant, if you can procure such a chance for me."

"If I cannot, Mrs. Kean can and will, so that is settled." Alice did serve her apprenticeship, and when the kitchen opened, was fully prepared to manage it. Half a dozen

maidens of the court had been placed under discipline at the same time, and acquitted themselves very creditably in the ruder and less complicated branches of cookery, aiding their superintendent so ably, as to assist materially in establishing the reputation of the kitchen on a solid and enviable basis. Alice moved with little Fay into a comfortable room over the archway and found that sweet and desirable satisfaction which always arises from a faithful performance of our duties. Sometimes she was a little homesick for her absent husband; but took great comfort in his numerous letters and the certainty of an early reunion.

And as to the tenants of Dennis Court. How did they proceed? Did they all at once become model men, women and children? Of course not. Anybody acquainted with human nature, would give us the lie for such an assertion. Indeed, they were far from being perfect, and often taxed the patience and temper of their patrons to the utmost. Richard saw very soon that they could not be left to themselves, without the certainty of sinking back into their former sloth and untidiness. So Richard and his aunt put their heads together, and, after due deliberation entered upon the following course. When the houses were finished Mrs. Kean called a meeting of her future tenants to the large room above the kitchen. We have forgotten to state that this room was provided with a small platform at one end, and quite a number of desks and benches at the other, while the center contained a large table, and the walls, shelves on which books of useful information were placed for the use of any one, inclined to visit the room. A number of periodicals was placed on the tables, free to such visitors, nor was there any condition coupled with the admittance, excepting that of a cleanly appearance and a civil behavior. Richard intended to introduce lectures in the winter, but did not deem it wise to push these features too rapidly, knowing well that too much of a good thing is apt to create nausea, especially in case of chronic mental dyspepsia.

When, on the evening of the meeting, the seats and benches of the reading room had been filled to overflowing,

Mrs. Kean arose and addressed her clients in this characteristic manner:

Dear Friends: In giving you this title, I do not mean an empty sound, a mere formality, but the earnest, sober truth. I consider you my friends and shall prove to you, if I have not proved it already that I am, and shall continue to be your friend. With the aid, and in the name of Mr. Velder I have built for you comfortable homes, which you can occupy as soon as you sign a contract, which I shall submit to you to-morrow in this room. The shanties which filled this court only a few months ago were calculated to beget habits of filth and untidiness, habits conducive to physical illness and moral degradation. While I admit that the condition of your former homes made such habits excusable, though hardly justifiable, I am determined that they shall not be practiced in the new cottages I have erected for you. You find a clause in your contract, authorizing me to enter your premises at my pleasure, though at seasonable hours, of course, to inspect them and to convince myself that they have not been defaced or soiled in an unbecoming manner. Your contract, furthermore, authorizes me to evict you on short notice if I find you guilty of such misdemeanors as I mentioned. I am aware that these are rather summary powers, but experience has convinced me of their necessity, while, on the other hand, my conduct must have convinced you that I have your own interest, and nothing but this interest in view, in making and enforcing them. Besides, you are free agents in this respect, and can refuse my cottages and my contracts if you see proper. You are aware that a laundry has been established in the south wing of this building. It shall be the privilege of the tenants of Dennis Court, to get their washing done there at mere nominal rate, to be fixed by myself. I need not say that this privilege must not be abused at the peril of losing it at once and certainly. You are also aware that a public kitchen will be opened in the basement and ground floor of this wing. Here, again, you have the privilege of purchasing superior food at much lower rates than you could prepare it

yourselves. I need not add that this franchise also is coupled with conditions, whose violation will result in their sudden withdrawal. A bath-room has been erected in the other wing which is at your service free of charge. To prevent quarreling a permit must be secured from Mrs. Murphy, the superintendent of the laundry, who is instructed to issue only one at a time, and only from six in the morning to eight in the evening. No one is allowed to use the bath more than once a day, or longer than fifteen minutes. Any complaint made to me will certainly lead to the withdrawal of this valuable privilege. In conclusion let me say that Mr. Velder has opened this pleasant reading room for his tenants and such of their neighbors as will comply with his conditions. No book or periodical must be taken from the room. Visitors must be cleanly dressed and observe a civil behavior. The room will be closed at ten p. m., and no one will be permitted to remain after that time. You are all aware that the rent of the houses has been placed at the low sum of eight dollars. Mr. Velder expects a prompt remission of this sum, not for his own benefit, but that of his clients, which are scattered over the entire country, and would suffer by your remissness. A failure to pay the rent in two consecutive months will be surely followed by the eviction of the tenant, except in cases of sickness which must be reported to me for decision. Before saying good night to you, I will repeat, that my government, though fraternal, will be a strict one, and its provisions carried out in letter and in spirit. Trusting that nothing will occur to mar the cordial relations which you and I sustain; I bid you good night."

There was a good deal of jeering on the part of outsiders the next morning, but all the tenants of the court signed their contract and moved into their comfortable quarters to the envy of the very ones who had jeered them.

CHAPTER XIII.

THE BALL KEEPS ROLLING.

We have anticipated the development of Dennis Court, and have now to retrace our steps, to see what has become of Duncan and the other inmates of the grocery. The reader saw Alice and Sophie start on their drive to the bank, and is probably curious to learn the result of their errand. Well, in the evening they reported to Richard, and this is what he learned: The bank would take $35,000, with interest on that sum for one year, at six per cent., provided half the money was paid down. They would throw off the interest, if the entire sum was paid cash.

"Can one see the building?"

"I anticipated such a question, and put it to the clerk. He gave me the key with the request of returning it to-morrow evening."

"Is the building empty?"

"Only a few pieces of furniture are stored there, belonging to the bank, and for sale also."

"Well, let us all go in the morning and take a look at things. I doubt the wisdom of giving Charley a holiday, but as he is familiar with this socialistic den, we will have to let him off, I reckon."

So, on the following morning, all except Gottlieb took the street car for Bloome and Thirtieth streets, and got there half an hour later. The key grated in the rusty lock, showing that the building had not been used for quite a while. The appearance of things inside confirmed this view. Everything was covered with dust, to the disgust of the ladies and the detriment of their dresses, which trailed in the dust and raised it in clouds. First they examined the extensive pavement, which contained a dilapidated gymnasium, a number of broken chairs and benches, and piles of rubbish generally. There was also a furnace, which, at one time, had probably heated the whole building, but now showed the tooth of time as much as everything else. Next the ground floor was ex-

plored. They found more broken chairs, tables limping on three legs, shattered lamp chimneys, broken beer glasses, and even two or three mirror frames. One of the rooms seemed to have served as a bar room, for they noticed a little bar, with a moldy keg behind it and two or three decanters on the side board. Dust, dust, everywhere, forming an "ensemble" calculated to depress the spirit and to remind one strongly of the perishableness of mortals and their affairs.

A wide and massive stairway led to the second floor, causing Richard to remark: "The building is certainly strong and substantial, and has not suffered from the neglect manifest everywhere."

"No, the building is all right, and will require hardly any repairs, unless the roof is leaky. Isn't there lots of room, though?"

"Yes, these apartments are very spacious, and will suffice for years to come."

"Then you would advise its purchase?"

"I shall report favorably, unless a further examination shows some flaw. Ah, here is the way to the third floor. Whew! What a dust. Won't you ladies be kind enough to proceed and sweep a little with your trains?"

The ladies politely, but firmly declined, so Richard and Charles had to bear the brunt of the assault, but were rewarded for their trouble, when on reaching the top of the stairway, they entered a magnificent hall extending over the entire building and impressing the spectator by its very simplicity. At the far end they perceived a sort of stage, provided with scenes and other theatrical contrivances, making dramatic performances not only possible, but easy. The auditorium was supplied with seats, raising gradually in height and allowing a fair view of the stage. A handsome and roomy gallery ran along three sides and together with the seats below was capable of accommodating fully a thousand persons.

"Why, this is grand," Richard exclaimed enthusiastically. "I wasn't prepared for anything half so grand."

"I knew you would like the building; but can you scrape together enough money to secure it?"

"We must have the building if we have to steal the money," cried Richard laughingly. "May be, Mrs. Kean will lend us a helping hand. I must see her at once, for I would not miss the purchase of this hall for a thousand dollars."

Mrs. Kean *did* lend a helping hand and a few days later the deed was handed her on payment of $35,000, the purchaser being Richard Velder.

When the tinker informed Mr. Stitch of the purchase the next day, that worthy opened his eyes to their fullest capacity.

"Is it possible," he exclaimed. "Why your friend *is* a daisy. And you say, we can go and meet there without any charge whatever?"

"Excepting the cost of the gas."

"Why, of course. We ain't hogs, we ain't, to saddle such a splendid fellow with our gas bills. Won't our fellows open their eyes though. When can we commence?"

"Well, not before a week or so. If you saw the dust there you would be of the same opinion. I'll have to hire a dozen damsels from Dennis Court to sweep and scrub the building from top to bottom."

"Well, do, and allow us to share in footing the bill. It ain't fair that you should do all the work and then pay all the bills as well."

"Agreed; but now farewell. I'll engage the scrubbers, and report progress."

"*Do*, sir. Whew! Won't them fellows open their peepers when I tell them."

Richard found no difficulties in securing all the help he needed. Jim Murphy expressed his sincere regret at not being able to marshal these hosts, but secured a substitute "intoierly railoiable," he said, and was as good as his word, for the substitute did splendid execution. There were fully two dozen of the fair sex at his heels and it was refreshing to see how this corps of vengeance made the dust

fly. Richard made them commence with the upper floor. The dust was really thick enough to be shoveled. It was accordingly shoveled into barrels, and then carried down by the substitute and deposited on the sidewalk, to be afterward removed by the ashman. The shoveling was followed by sweeping, and this, in turn, by scrubbing. Next the windows were washed, and finally the seats scrubbed and cleaned, after which purification the fine hall looked like newly born, smiling upon the visitor like a being recovering from a cutaneous disease and rejoicing now in fresh linen. Richard resolved to give it a coat of paint, later on, and led his forces to the second floor, where the same process was gone through with. The building was of gigantic dimensions, and Richard had calculated with tolerable accuracy, when he had placed its readiness for occupancy at the end of the week. He was greatly pleased with the efficient help rendered him by the people of the court, and showed his gratitude by a little feast, which he spread for them in one of the rooms of the first floor the day after they finished their work. Gottlieb and Sophie were present; so was Mrs. Kean and Elinor; Jim Murphy and his spouse, Alice and Duncan and many other tenants of the court. Our friend also invited Stitch, who was one of the jolliest of the crowd, and made a little speech prompted partly by his enthusiasm for the new gospel, and partly by the beer furnished for the occasion and consumed in becoming moderation by the little tailor. One might have thought Richard had been popular before with the court, we mean Dennis, of course, so popular indeed that an increase of this popularity seemed impossible; but by this little indulgence to their appetites, he gained even more than by his unceasing interest in their spiritual welfare, and unfortunately indeed would have been the party bold enough to speak ill of him among the tenants or utter threats against him.

Richard saw that the large hall would require some energetic person to manage its business; so he offered the place to Mr. Rinehart, who was sagacious enough to see that the

post was likely to be a lucrative one, and therefore readily accepted it. The transfer of his goods and family was speedily effected, and then the building was thrown open to any and all the branches of the new order wishing to avail themselves of the privilege. Mr. Stitch was the first to lead his phalanx to the new temple, and proud indeed, he was, when they assembled fully sixty strong. Richard was present, to assist in the formation of the order, which assumed the name of Number One, to distinguish it from those likely to follow soon, but he declined the honor of presiding over it, as his manifold duties would prevent him from doing justice to the post. And now we must once more abandon the task of following him at every step, not because we would have nothing of interest to present to our readers. On the contrary. We claim that the most trivial work performed in such an exalted scheme, is surrounded with a halo ennobling it in the sight of every true lover of humanity, giving it a spiciness foreign to more trivial matters, no matter how interesting to the selfishly inclined or materially disposed. No, the plot thickens, and it will be utterly impossible for us to keep in hand and follow all the single threads of our story. We must be satisfied therefore with presenting to the reader's mind the powerful combinations, the deep reflections, the striking lights, the scenes of awe, of terror, of love and tenderness, of rage and hatred, of breathless suspense and keen intensity, which our story presents. There are enough of them dear reader, in fact, how could it be otherwise? Our tale is not fictitious. If you have not met exactly the same individuals presented on our stage, rest assured that they have their true counterparts in life, and that you have encountered them under different names and at other places. We represent a struggle more intense and bitter, more pathetic and comprehensive than any one which has hitherto marked the annals of the race. Trust with us, that our heroes will triumph; hope that their philanthrophic designs will be crowned with success, for if they are not, if the selfish, the despotic, the greedy and licentious crowd them to the wall; if

they toil their noble purposes and crush them under their relentless tyranny, the aspect of human affairs will take a sombre hue indeed, the millenium will be removed to distant epochs, and our civilization bought with so much blood, so much misery, so much suffering and so much time, swamp in the universal brutality, which must and will ensue before the race can be born anew. Yes, trust with us, that our heroes will succeed, and do not withhold from them that sympathy which is in itself a powerful ally.

The day after the opening of National Hall, as the place was christened, Charles Duncan said farewell to his wife and child and to his new friends, and started for the west. Richard, on the other hand, resumed his wanderings through the city, feeling that he had lost much time, and determined that it should be made up by double industry. His efforts were eminently successful, so successful in fact as to fill him with wonder, and strengthened into absolute certainty his previous belief in the timeliness of his work. Wherever he went he made converts, and soon the orders which met in National Hall rose to tens, then twenties, and before the end of winter had crowded up to number one hundred. Duncan was equally successful. It was a pleasure to read his letters. "Our membership grows at an almost incredible rate, and what surprises me most, the women are as anxious to join our ranks as the men. We have a dozen orders composed exclusively of women. I took them in, knowing that you would not only approve of such a step, but rejoice at it. In fact it is my belief, Richard, that a movement which fails to enlist the sympathy of women is still born. The funds you sent came very handy. We have rented a hall and are now self-sustaining, although it has been impossible thus far to create a reserve fund, as we must prepare for emergencies. I am glad to hear that Gottlieb is drilling your forces. We have some old soldiers amongst us, and at our next meeting I shall suggest the propriety of introducing such a feature in our exercises. Well, enough for to-day. With hearty good wishes to you all I remain, Yours Sincerely,

CHARLES DUNCAN.

He was correct. Gottlieb *did* drill the members of the order and almost every member excepting perhaps some old men, had joined some company or other. When Richard had time he frequented the nightly meetings and infused quite an enthusiasm for gymnastics, wrestling and similar sports into the members. He had a shooting gallery erected in the basement, running the full length of the building, and there he astonished his mates by the accuracy of his never failing aim. They soon looked up to him in this, as almost all other things, and before long Dick Brown, the tinker, became a celebrity in the city. His deportment, however, remained the same. He continued to be plain, painstaking, civil and obliging fellow, following his profession with a never swerving assiduity, as if his life depended upon his earnings. Of course in his estimation, the seed he scattered during his wanderings was of much greater value and importance than the money he pocketed. Yet even in this he took pride, feeling that he was thus setting an example worthy of imitation and likely to be followed. Among the converts he made daily he found many able men, and such he sent out to the various cities of the land. Before the end of the year orders had been established in Fratopolis, Smokopolis, Shoatopolis, Lousopolis and many other places. They all flourished in a surprising manner, and at a meeting of all the orders of Plutopolis, which occurred about New Years, he stated that reports from all these places justified his opinion that the Order of the Nation had even then, that is, only five months since its creation, reached a membership of over two hundred thousand. He said he took this opportunity to bid them farewell for a few months, as their missionaries had expressed the wish of seeing him in their midst, expressing their belief that such a move would be followed by good results. He exhorted them to keep the ball rolling and never to lose an hour to spread the new faith among the ignorant or unbelievers.

He did go the next evening, but we cannot follow him. He went from place to place, from State to State, until he had journeyed over every portion of that immense country. At

some places he tarried long, at others only a day or two, adapting his movements to the wants and interests of the people. He did not travel as a tinker, however, feeling that such a procedure would consume more time than he could spare, and feeling also, that addresses delivered to large crowds would further the cause more at this state of development than the necessarily slow instructions meted out to a few individuals.

During his journey he was the subject of many criticisms in the papers. Most of them were moderately fair. While some called him a crank, and others a dreamer, an enthusiast, or impractical extremist, but very few denied that he showed remarkable ability and consistency, living up to his preachings in every particular and exhorting his followers to use moderation in all their dealings with their foes, as well as friends. A few conservative papers, however, denounced him and his doctrines as extremely dangerous, because fascinating, and expressed their belief in the propriety of increasing the federal army, as the militia had become infected with these dangerous doctrines, and could no longer be trusted in emergencies.

It was in the fall, when Richard Brown returned to Plutopolis, where his friends gave him a warm reception. He learned to his great satisfaction, that the members of the order in that city alone had reached the surprising number of five hundred thousand. National Hall was still the center of the order, but a dozen other halls had been rented besides, and the brotherhood possessed a reserve fund amounting to many thousands. Here also women had been drawn into the movement, forming dozens of orders or societies. Nor is this to be wondered at, as the brotherhood proclaimed the equality of the two sexes, allowing equal rights and equal duties. So great was the influx of women into the order, that the churches of the city began to be alarmed and preached condemning sermons, denouncing the godlessness of the movement, its disregards of the teachings of the bible which justifies poverty, and gives to woman an inferior position. These ser-

mons, however, had an effect contrary to that desired and contemplated. They called the attention of women to the unworthy position to which the bible condemns woman, and after due investigation these harangues increased the desertions from the churches to the ranks of the brotherhood.

CHAPTER XIV.

THE BRUTALITY OF THE POOR.

On the Sunday following his arrival, Richard took his customary morning walk in the park, when he discovered a figure on one of the benches which appeared familiar to him. He cast a second scrutinizing glance at it and, true enough, there sat the old Scandinavian gentleman, whom he had met over a year ago, on almost the same bench. There was the old-fashioned broad-brimmed hat, the palitot buttoned to the neck, the shoes with the huge buckles and the round glasses, over which the benevolent eyes peered into the distance. The locks, however, had become a little grayer, the palitot a little more seedy, and the hat a little more dilapidated. Richard sat down beside him, as on the former occasion, and said: "Good morning, sir; how are you, and have you found your niece?"

The other gave a little start, and replied with an uncertain puzzled look: "I do not recollect of having met you before. Will you refresh my memory?"

"With pleasure, sir. We met on this very spot over a year ago, when you informed me that you hailed from Sweden, and had come to Occidentia to find your niece, Mary; nay, Bertha, was her name, I think."

A smile passed over the old man's features, as he replied: "Ah, now I recollect. You were the gentleman who gave me a few circulars on parting, circulars, whose contents I disbelieved and condemned then, but which a sad experience has proved to be only too true."

"I had forgotten about the papers, a slip of memory at

which you will not wonder, when I tell you that I am in the habit of stuffing everybody that way. So you have become converted to my views. Am I to conclude from that remark, that the world has not treated you very gently since we met?"

"Gently?" the foreigner asked bitterly, "why they have mocked me, scorned me, and robbed me ever since."

"That is too bad. To tell the truth, I anticipated something of the kind and had half a mind to post you a little on leaving you; but you had such an air of self-posession that I felt a little shy to offer you advice. I am now sorry I did not follow my first impulse. But what of Bertha: Have you not found her yet?"

"Not a vestige of her, my friend, for something tells me that I may consider you as such. They sent me from Pontius to Pilate on errnds, which I now suspect to have been those of a fool, until my means are exhausted, and I had to stop from want of funds as well as from exhaustion."

Here he stopped, looking so miserable, and yet so touchingly grand in his simplicity, that Richard's heart warmed towards him, causing him to form the resolution of charging himself with this big boy.

"'Tis too bad," he cried with genuine sympathy. "But, may be it is not too late yet. Will you allow me to offer you my assistance in this as well as in other matters?"

The stranger cast at him a glance, showing plainly that the meanness of the world had done its mischief, and poisoned a mind once so trustful, simple and genial.

He hesitated fully half a minute, then said uncertainly:

"Your words are very kind, sir, and I long to confide in them; but I have heard of so many of the same nature during this wretched year that I cannot help feeling distrustful. What interest can you take in an old man whom you saw only once, and who was born in a foreign land?"

Richard gazed at him with compassion. "The world must indeed have been very cruel to you, to dim a mind as clear and placid as a spring, when first I met you. What in-

terest I take in you? Do you forget the papers I handed you? I take in you the interest of one human being in another. But I forgot; these rascals have made you suspicious, so I must not preach but argue. Tell me what reason could I possibly have to dupe you. Are you not poor?"

"My purse is exhausted."

"Are you not old and friendless?"

"I could, indeed, be of little use as a helpmate or a worker."

"In that case, what inducements could I have to deceive you, and to abuse your confidence?"

"You reason logically. Little inducement could you have to deceive me, excepting perhaps, the source of sport which you and others might derive from it."

Richard was moved beyond expression. How some rogue or rogues must have abused this child of nature!

"These words imply no flattering estimate of my character," he said kindly, "but I excuse them for the wrong done you by parties who boast the name of men, but really stand below the brute. All I can and will say, is: Try me, sir, and if you detect the least trace of malicious selfishness or treachery in my conduct, why spurn me and cast me off like a poisonous serpent."

There is a ring in truth which no imitation can fully reach. The old man was conquered. He wiped a suspicious moisture from his eyes, and extending his right hand to Richard, said in a tremulous voice:

"I will believe you, I *do* believe you. They have been very cruel to me; but to use such language and then deceive me would be worthy of a Judas. Yes sir, I believe you, I *do* believe and trust you."

"Thank you, Mr.—what is your name, please?"

"Andersen, Eric Andersen."

"Thank you, Mr. Andersen. I hope I can soon prove to you the sincerity of my professions. And now Mr. Andersen, give me an outline of your circumstances and situation, to enable me to form an idea of the course we had better pursue

to discover Bertha, and better your condition. But stop," he continued, seeing that the other prepared to do his bidding. "This is rather a public place for confidential communications. Where do you live? Had not we better seek the quietude of your room, before we begin?"

The other hesitated and showed a slight embarrassment. "Do not misjudge my silence," he then said hastily. "It was not dictated by distrust; but—but by the simple fact that since this morning I have no room which I could call my own."

"No room? Was I not lucky then to find you this morning."

"You?" the Swede said, with a touch of humor, "it strikes me the luck is all on my side. Well, having no room to take you to, I may as well make a virtue of necessity and unburden my mind right here. I—"

"Nay, stop a moment. If you have no room we must procure one. I do not wish to wound your feelings, but—but have you any baggage left?"

"My trunk is in the clutches of my landlord, who refuses to surrender it until a little boarding bill has been settled."

"The Shylock. Well, lead me to his den."

The Swede arose, but, was it increasing age, was it want of proper nourishment, or the excitement of the moment, he shook visibly, causing Richard to exclaim. "Come take my arm and lean on me. Lean hard, I am strong and young and only too glad to support old age so worthily attained."

The old gentleman accepted the proffered arm, saying huskily. "It is the reaction, dear sir."

A sudden thought flashed through Richard's brain. Perhaps it is also the want of breakfast. But he was too delicate to give it words. When they reached the street Richard halted before a restaurant, saying gaily: "See here. There is a restaurant. Talking has made me hungry. Will you do me the honor of being my guest?"

The old man gazed at him over his spectacles. "That's right," he said with a grim smile, "gloss it over. You know,

I had no breakfast and take this delicate way offering me one."

"Have your own way about that" Richard replied with a laugh. "It isn't polite to contradict old people, so if you consent to be my guest you may arrange the details to suit yourself."

They enter the establishment, and when the viands had been placed before them, the old man attacked them with a zest filling Richard with mixed pleasure and compassion. The meal seemed to restore his guest to some of his former buoyancy, for as they proceeded on their way, his step was firmer, and his bearing more erect.

After walking half a dozen blocks further, the Swede pointed to a small tavern, saying: "This is the place. Well, I declare, you have not given me your name."

"Richard Brown, Mr. Andersen, generally known in town as Dick, the Tinker."

Their arrival at the door of the tavern ended their conversation. There was an awning before the house, and a number of the inmates sat on chairs, taking the usual Sunday siesta. No sooner had our friends made their appearance, when one of the men, a young fellow of rather rude and vulgar looks, exclaimed: "Hallo, professor, how is Bertha?"

"Richard felt his companion's arm tremble, and saw a deep red mount his brow. Richard prided himself on considerable self possession, but this unkind jest taxed it to the utmost. Abandoning Andersen's arm he walked up to the fellow, gazed him squarely in the face, and said coldly, with ill-disguised contempt:

"Mr. Andersen is my *friend*, sir, and I am ready to resent severely any indignities offered him."

After uttering these words he retained his position sufficiently long to give him an opportunity for replying. The fellow, however, dropped his eyes before Richard's cold scrutiny, and remained silent.

Richard had spoken loud enough to be heard by the crowd, to intimate, that his remark had been intended for all.

Returning to Andersen, he said: "Now, dear sir, where is the landlord?"

Before the old man could reply, a figure rose from one of the chairs, exclaiming: "Here he be. Do you want anything of me?"

"If you will please step into your office I shall inform you the nature of my errand."

We need not inform the reader at this place, that there was a certain something in Richard's decisive tone and manner, claiming attention and respect. So the landlord deemed it prudent to lead the two newcomers into the office, where he inquired rather brusquely: "Well, what is it you fellows want?"

"Make out Mr. Andersen's bill, sir."

"There is no need of making that out. It has been made out a dozen times, and he knows it."

"Let me have it, then."

The landlord opened a safe, rummaged amongst some papers, and finally pulled forth a slip, which he threw rather contemptuously on the counter. Richard had no desire to pick a quarrel with him; so he took up the slip, reading: "For ten weeks' board and lodging, $50."

"Is this correct, Mr. Andersen?"

"Of course it is. Do you think we cheat here, sir?"

"Is this bill correct, Mr. Andersen?" Richard asked a second time, without heeding the landlord's interruption.

"I am afraid it is, sir. At least—"

"All right, then, we won't wrangle over a dollar or two. Receipt this if you please."

The landlord complied, and when Richard had handed him the money he inquired. "Now, where is Mr. Andersen's trunk?"

"In the garret amongst other rubbish," the other replied sneeringly.

"Have the goodness, then, to have it brought down without delay, as we desire to take it with us."

"Well, there ain't such a dreadful hurry, is there? He took plenty time to pay his bill."

"I do not wish to bandy words with you. I'll give you ten minutes to procure the trunk with *all* its contents, mind. If it has not been delivered to us then, I shall notify the police."

He drew his watch, looked at it, and then sank into a chair to await the landlord's pleasure. For fully a minute wrath and prudence wrestled for the upper hand in the fellow. Then prudence conquered by whispering.

"Get the trunk, to avoid cost. There is no earthly use in throwing money into the street." So he dispatched the porter for the trunk which was delivered to Richard just at the expiration of the time of grace.

"Can you procure an express wagon for me?" he inquired slipping a quarter into the man's hand.

"Certainly, there is one halting before the house now."

"Call him in, please."

The express man was called, and when the baggage had been placed in his charge with the injunction to deliver it at the grocery on Lemon street, Richard and his protege retired from the tavern. While they passed the loungers on the pavement, not a word was said, but when our friends were a hundred feet away a suppressed laughter became audible. It was the old story of the fist in the pocket. Richard, of course ignored it, and hailing a street car, was soon whirled towards Gottlieb's emporium. We give the establishment this name on purpose. From its original humble proportions, it had grown to be a real emporium now. An additional lot had been purchased, and covered with a large building in which not only groceries of every description, but a selection of hard and hollow ware and dry goods were offered or sale. Six clerks had been engaged, one after another, partly because Gottlieb and Sophie could not wait on all the customers, and partly because their time was occupied by other things. A little girl had made her appearance, engaging much of the young mother's time, and as to Gottlieb, he had become grand military instructor in National Hall, drilling his recruits to his

heart's content, until fifty thousand stalwart yeomen hailed him chief. At first they had drilled with sticks, but gradually as the resources of the order increased, rifles of an improved pattern had been purchased, lining the armory of National Hall, and the smaller rendezvous' of the brotherhood, to the alarm of many a croaker who claimed that these weapons in the hands of such fanatics, endangered the public safety. Now and then a conservative newspaper published a leader on this subject, clamoring for an increase of the army to keep these anarchists in subjection; but as the laws of the country forbade only concealed fire arms, all these croakings had thus far availed their authors nothing, although Richard forsaw the probability of early attempts on the part of capital to crush the rising spirit of the masses by more stringent police measures. Duncan had written him several times on this point, regretting that the lack of funds of the Lakopolis brotherhood had thus far made the purchase of arms impossible. To this Richard had replied:

"Organize companies and offer them to the State as militia .True, this makes them subject to the governor's call, but the danger of the abuse of his power is small in comparison with the advantage you will derive from the drill."

But we have lost sight of Richard and his protege. When they reached the grocery Gottlieb and his spouse were rather surprised at this increase of the family, but Richard had brought the stranger, and that was sufficient. So perfect was their trust in him and in the sagacity and benevolence of his measures, that they would have jumped into the river, if he had bidden them.

Richard took Sophie aside and gave her a hurried account of the stranger's case, and his own intentions. Then he added: "And now Sophie, have you some spare room where we can put him?"

"Certainly, there is the attic room in the new building, just as cosy a place as a king could wish."

"Is it ready?"

"I can make it so in ten minutes."

"All right, I'll take his trunk up, and when you are ready make me a sign."

The sign was made very shortly, and Richard took his new protege to his new quarters, saying on entering: "Now, Mr. Andersen, make yourself comfortable. I'll leave you to arrange things to suit yourself, and when you have done I'll come to hear your story."

As he was on the point of leaving, the old man took both his hands in his, and said with a voice half choked with emotion? "Mr. Brown, how can I ever repay this? It is all like a dream, from which I expect to awaken every moment."

"It isn't though, and you can repay me by saying nothing more about it. Good bye, I'll be back shortly."

Down stairs he once more cornered Sophie, confiding to her his fear that her guest's linen was in a highly dilapidated condition. "You examine his trunk when he is away, and if you see anything wrong, quietly restore or renew it. We must not hurt his feelings, you know."

She nodded intelligently, and informed him late that evening that Mr. Andersen's linen was past mending, so she would get him half a dozen shirts, beside the requisite handkerchiefs, socks, cravats, etc. Nor was she slow in executing her errand of mercy, for when the old gentleman opened his trunk the next evening he found his entire wardrobe renewed, with a liberality only less marked than the delicacy exercised in the act. He saw that they did not want him to say anything about it, and he obeyed, although his heart was full to bursting. But this does not put us in possession of his history, so we returned to the moment when Richard re-entered his room and said. "Now, Mr. Andersen, I am ready to hear what you have to say, but remember that I am no detective, nor you on the witness stand."

"Thank you, my son. You do not object to my calling you son?"

"I do not, provided you allow me the privileges of a son.

I am going to take one right now. Why don't you take off this overcoat, sir."

"I answer as frankly as you ask. Because my wardrobe is hardly in a presentable condition."

"Then we'll make it so. Off with the palitot." He laughingly took hold of the garment, and Andersen seeing his kind intentions, and having, morever, a keen sense for the humerous, yielded to the gentle force of his new friend His clothes were indeed far from presentable. The coat had numerous tears and holes, and the pantaloons were hardly better.

"I see we must postpone our story a little while longer," Richard said, feigning a comical consternation. "Excuse me a moment. I think you and Gottlieb are of nearly the same build, so I'll go and see whether I cannot annex a suit of his until we can secure a new outfit. He left and was gone fully fifteen minutes. When he returned, he said: "Come with me, Mr. Andersen, if you please."

The old man had by this time adopted the docility of a child. At first this kindness had been embarrassing, but it was offered with such genuine friendship that the bitter edge was soon wore off, and now the keen satisfaction of stripping off his rags and donning nice new clothes overpowered the rest of his diffidence, and he followed his patron with the readiness of a person who has had his coat drenched and does not care whether the other garments follow suit or not. Richard proceeded down stairs, and finally stopped at a door, saying: "Go in here, sir, and lock the door after you. Things inside explain themselves. So I need not interpret them. When you are through, come back to your room where I shall await you. Richard shoved him in. The apartment was a bathroom, and a large tin tub contained warm water, while soap, sponges, brushes and towels were spread on a neighboring table. A clean shirt, ditto socks, and a complete suit were laid on another table, with the evident design of being donned by Mr. Andersen. He stood for a moment, as if overwhelmed, and involuntarily folded his hands, as if invoking silent bless-

ing upon the donor of all these things. Then he rapidly stripped his rags, and proceeded to bathe with the delight of a person who indulges in a favorite pastime long missing. We need not stand by to watch him, but will say that when he returned to Richard, that young man hardly recognized him. So he said approvingly, "that looks something like it. Now take this easy chair, and spin your yarn."

Andersen complied, heaving a deep sigh of relief and satisfaction, as he sank in the comfortable chair, and then began:

"I was born in Stockholm, but raised in Upsala, where my father was appointed professor of ancient languages. I showed a predilection for natural science from childhood and determined to devote myself to the study of chemistry and its sister branches, when I had reached the age of sixteen."

"Then you and I have kindred minds and tastes," said Richard. "That accounts perhaps for the interest I took in you, sir."

"Don't slander yourself Richard. You would take the kindest interest even in a savage. But to proceed: At eighteen my father gave me enough money to study chemistry for a year or two at the University of Goettingen, in Germany, then famous through the lectures of some eminent chemists. There I stayed three years and,—"

"Of course, you speak German, then?"

"Not so fluently as then, but I have retained enough to understand it when spoken, and to reply in it."

"That comes handy. Gottlieb and his worthy spouse are both natives of Germany, and will take a double interest in you, when they learn that you speak their language. But excuse my interruption."

"When I was through I returned to Upsala, where I worked first as the assistant of the professor of chemistry, but was installed in his position a few years later, at the time of, and on account of his death. This professorship I have filled uninterruptedly for forty-five years. About eighteen months ago I was pensioned and would probably be living at Upsala

at this very moment, if I had not received the letter informing me of my sister's death, and filling me with the desire of finding and befriending my niece."

Richard pondered a moment or two. It was a simple life, the life of a scholar probably eminent in his branch, but strangely ignorant not only of other sciences, but of the ways of life. At last he said: "Mr. Andersen, I presume you have mingled but little with society?"

"Very little, my son. I did not care for their ways, nor they for mine."

"But your journey to Goettingen and your sojourn there must have caused numerous contacts with the world."

"Not so many as you imagine. In those days we had no railways, and the post chase is a rather secluded vehicle of travel. I traveled from Upsala on board a vessel, landing at Brenerhafen. Thence proceeded on a river craft to Muenden, and thence the last ten miles by stage to Goettingen. You see in that way a fellow would not see much of the wortd."

Richard *did* see it, and now understood some traits in the professor's character strange to him at first. "And don't you still draw your pension?" he inquired.

"I do, but my expenses have been so very great that I was forced to anticipate it fully six months, and can not draw now until the first of April, next year. Besides my leave of absence expires at that date, and unless it is renewed I must return to Sweden or lose my pension."

"That's queer, can you not live where you please?"

"It seems not. Perhaps our government wishes me to spend my money at home. At all events, you may rely upon the correctness of my statement."

"Then we must either find Bertha in a hurry, or get your furlough renewed. Through whom do you communicate with the government at home?"

"Through the Swedish consul."

"And did you never invoke his assistance in your search."

"Not until recently. While I had money my landlord was as sweet as pie, volunteering his assistance and insisting

upon having my mail sent to his place. I never received any letter from him, but whether none arrived, or whether he appropriated them I cannot tell."

"Then Bertha may have written to you repeatedly?"

"She may, but as I stated before, such letters, if written, never reached me."

"But now you have sent instructions to have any letters arriving in Upsala for you, sent in care of the Swedish consul here?"

"It is, as you say, but I must confess, that I entertain but little hope of help from that quarter."

"But why is this, Mr. Andersen?"

"Simply because the consul received me very coldly, calling me names which are polite synonyms for dolt or fool. He was kind enough to say or insinuate that he had never seen such simplicity before, and if you are honest my son, you will say about the same thing."

"You certainly are very simple-hearted and simple-mannered. But that, Mr. Andersen, is no disgrace, but rather a virtue in my estimation. Your simple life in the lecture rooms of Upsala could hardly impart to you the 'finesse' of a Tallyrand or Macchiavelli, but I tell the honest truth, when I say that I prefer your simplicity to their cunning."

"I thank you sincerely, my son, for your kind criticism; but you must confess that my simplicity disqualifies me greatly for hunting lost maidens."

"So it does, Mr. Andersen, and I shall, therefore, take this matter in hand myself. Did you ever advertise in the great journals of Plutopolis?"

"Not extensively. At first I did not deem this necessary, and when I finally became convinced of the expediency of such a measure, I lacked the means to resort to it."

"Well, I shall insert an advertisement in every one of them to-morrow. Let me see. Bertha Rasmussen, age—how old did you say?"

"She must be over eighteen now."

"Eighteen then; is requested to communicate without

delay with Gottlieb Grad, 1591 Lemon street, Plutopolis, if she desires to learn the whereabouts of her uncle, Eric Andersen."

"You think this indirect communication best?"

"Well, it answers as well as any. But I hear Sophie calling for supper; so come on."

At supper the conversation turned upon the Brotherhood and its principles. When Richard emphasized the necessity of enlightening the masses, declaring that even a superficial knowledge of natural science was calculated to dissipate the darkness, superstition and bigotry still befogging so many minds, Mr. Andersen said: "Mr. Brown, that touches my province. I have delivered many such lectures as you suggest, at home, and received many favorable criticisms regarding them. If you think that my feeble efforts in that line would advance your cause, I would be only too happy to offer you my services. Of course I don't talk English very well, but if you think—"

"I think the idea is superb, and we shall try at once, only don't make the thing too long and learned at first, you know, and then make experiments, that arouses their interest."

"I understand, and think I could gain your approbation. I have no doubt of it professor. At all events, with your permission, we shall try to-morrow night. There will be a general meeting in National Hall, that is, quite a crowd. If you need anything for your experiments, write it down and I shall procure it to-morrow. Have you thought of the subject you will present to the audience."

"Yes, Richard. I thought of reproducing a course of lectures I once delivered at home with great success, entitled 'Chemistry, Man's Handmaid.' Some of them touch upon the various trades and occupations of man; others on house keeping, touching on those of women, all of them showing the value, nay the *necessity* of the knowledge of chemistry in even the humblest vocations."

"An excellent subject, Mr. Andersen. If you can show

the necessity to our friends, you will do them a great service and at the same time enable our cause."

"Please inform me a few days before hand, when you intend speaking on housekeeping to enable me to inform our sisters and thus secure a full attendance."

In the morning Richard called at the various newspaper offices and arranged for the advertisement in question. Later he called at the Swedish Consulate to interview its head, and urge a more zealous attendance to Andersen's case. He found the consul ready to make fun of the matter and take it very lightly. Richard's seriousness, however, stopped this levity at once.

"Professor Andersen's simplicity," he said impressively, "entitles him to the consideration of all men, and especially his countrymen, as it originates with the faithful and long continued services to his country. He had no time to learn the ways of the world, and this ignorance instead of being made a subject of sport, should secure to him the respectful and cheerful assistance of all men. I have no doubt that the government of Sweden entertains these views, and would readily and earnestly rebuke any negligence or levity of its servants in this case."

The consul listened attentively and promised to exert his influence in Andersen's behalf, adding that he expected to be able to secure for him a prolongation of his furlough, and closing with the promise to send to the professor's present address any mail which might arrive for him.

Next he purchased the jars, lamps and chemicals which Andersen had ordered, and then secured for him a plain but becoming suit of black cloth in which to appear before his audience that night. He knew the importance which a superficial world puts upon appearances and was determined to aid to the best of his ability, the debut of his old friend. In the afternoon he plied his old vocation, visiting places which had hitherto escaped his attention, or others, where encouragement or information was needed, and only returned to the grocery when the clocks on the steeples pointed to the hour

of supper. At seven he put the professor's apparatus in the spring wagon, invited that worthy to a seat at his side, and drove to the hall. The meeting was called at eight, and when our friends entered the hall they found it well filled, the men standing or setting in groups, conversing, and waiting for the call to order. It was given precisely at eight, and obeyed with an alacrity pleasant to behold. Richard had endeavored so instill from the start, the necessity of order and dispatch, claiming that a quiet and orderly conduct would not only secure them the approbation of the public, but go far to silence the apprehension of timid croakers. The business of the order was first attended to, occupying a little over half an hour. When it was over the president rapped on his desk with his gavel, and informed the meeting that Brother Brown wished to say a few words. A general hush followed this announcement, and when Richard stepped to the front, the dropping of a pin might have been heard. This token of respect and interest, was, no doubt, mainly due to the universal regard in which our friend was held by his associates, but also to his eloquence, intelligence and sagacity. Richard had from the start remembered the adage that "familiarity begets contempt." While he had addressed these men quite frequently, he had taken pains not to tire them with his orations, thus insuring a freshness impossible with a daily repetition. Nor had he ever addressed his associates, unless he had really something to say, a policy whose pursuit now and always secured for him their undivided attention. He said:

"Friends and Brethren: You have often heard me say, and are likely to hear me say again and again, that no elevation of the workingmen, no redress of their wrongs, no advancement of their interests can possibly be secured without enlightenment and the acquisition of useful knowledge. It is mainly the superior knowledge, skill and education, which has enabled capitalists to usurp the rights of the masses, and only by our endeavors in that direction can we hope, nay ex-

pect, to compete with them, and compel them finally to respect our claims. Your general conduct proves that you are not only deeply impressed with the necessity of the dissemination of knowledge in our ranks, but also bound and determined to secure the advantage accruing therefrom. You have benefitted by every opportunity which offered, to perfect yourselves in political economy, in the sciences bearing most directly upon the interests of our race, and also those physical exercises calculated to quaiify the body for the endurance of hardships, or the defense and securement of our inalienable rights. This being the case, it gives me great satisfaction to inform you to-night, that I have been offered the services of a gentlemen, who, for nearly a half century, has made the teaching of chemistry the business of his life, and now volunteers to give us a number of lectures on this most important of all modern sciences, lectures to be adapted to our wants and intermingled with experiments. The gentleman is a native of Sweden, and has requested me to remind you that he has mastered our language by study in late years, begging your indulgence for inaccuracies and imperfections he may betray. And now permit me to introduce to you and your consideration my friend, Professor Eric Andersen, of the University of Upsala."

Mr. Andersen stepped forward, made his bow and began his remarks, which not only captivated the audience from the beginning, but created the undivided astonishment of our friend. Was this really the same man that had been made the sport of roughs, the same man that had betrayed a simplicity laughable in the eyes of even a child? It seemed as if the stepping upon the platform had, as it were, transformed him. His simplicity had become frankness, his credulity, confidence. Even his language had undergone a change, being broader, more comprehensive and appropriate. Of course, his foreign accent remained, but this accent, instead of hurting his delivery, only gave it a piquancy, which lent it an additional charm. Before the professor had spoken five minutes, Richard perceived that he was a complete master of the sub-

ject he had chosen. Andersen did not only know what he was talking about, but he interspersed his remarks with such genuine humor, and spiced them with so many telling anecdotes, that his audience uttered an involuntary "ah" of regret, when the professor closed his lecture at the expiration of an hour. Richard warmly pressed his hands, and thanked him most cordially for the splendid effort with which he had entertained the brotherhood, while our friend in turn was heartily congratulated upon the procurement of a person that promised to prove a phœnix amongst lecturers. The happiest in the crowd, however, was Andersen himself. A deep satisfaction filled his heart, the consciousness of being able to thus repay the kindness of his young friend and rescuer from want and abuse. He proposed nightly repetitions of the lecture, but Richard put in his veto, saying: "You are too precious an acquisition to exhaust your strength in such frenzied efforts. Besides, familiarity breeds contempt. No, no, my dear sir, you take life easy now. If you give us a lecture once, or at most twice a week, you do all you ought to do. Remember, you are no longer a boy."

"Only sixty-nine," the professor said with a laugh.

"An *old* boy, then, at the least. But here we are at home. I hope you will sleep easy on your laurels."

We must pursue the same policy with the professor, as with Richard and the other characters of our tale, *i. e.*, give him an occasional notice, when time and opportunity permit. As we shall probably lose sight of him for a while, at least, we may as well add here, that his first lecture to the sisters of the brotherhood was even a greater success, than the first one. Richard had taken pains to advertise this lecture of "the chemistry on cookery" extensively, partly in the little weekly organ of the brotherhood, which had been started lately, to cement more firmly the individual members, and partly in the press of the city generally. In consequence, the hall was packed with the flower of the fair sex that night, with a sprinkling of the sterner sex, which we fear, was more attracted by the ladies, than the lecture. Richard duly intro-

duced his friend, who then gave the ladies a harangue, balancing so cleverly between dry science and trite common places, that they were not merely delighted, but greatly benefitted by his words. These two lectures insured his fame. The house was packed every time he spoke, nor could even bad winter nights deter the people from drinking knowledge from lips so eloquent, humorous and benevolent. Richard told Andersen more than once, that these lectures did not only spread much useful information amongst the people, but increased the membership, especially of the sisters, in an astonishing degree. Our friend, however, had long since ceased to wonder at this marvelous growth. He had learned that the subject had only to be presented to the people in the proper light, to bring conviction and subsequently support. At first he had attended to the correspondence with outside lodges; but gradually the work had assumed such proportions that a salaried secretary had to be appointed, whose duty it was to answer queries and communicate facts. He was not greatly surprised to learn from this official at the end of the second year of the existence of the order, that a careful count placed the membership at nearly two millions, fully one third being women.

It was on the morning after Andersen's first lecture that Richard passed Mr. Stitch's shop, and was called in by that gentleman.

"That was a fine treat you gave us last night, Dick," he said, after the first greeting; "where in the world did you fish for that fellow?"

"On dry land, Mr. Stitch."

"Well, he is a caution. The way he brings those fine words out is a surprise to me. But see here Brown, did you hear of the trouble they had in Irishtown last night?"

"I did not. What was the matter?"

"Oh, well, I reckon our teachings have crazed some of those ignorant chaps, for they claim that the distribution of all the good things is at hand, and threaten to call upon the rich to hand over their surplus."

"Poor cranks. That proves plainly that without knowledge, ideas may prove dangerous."

"So they be, Dick, and no mistake. It is like a child's playing with fire—it may set the town on fire."

"Yes, and get burnt itself. I trust the folks of Dennis Court are not amongst these fanatics?"

"Not they, not they. I tell you a wonderful change has come over those people, and one hardly recognizes in them the doleful set of two years ago. No, it is them vagabonds two or three streets further back, as make the trouble."

"Well, I shall go there to-night and see for myself."

"Yes go, you have a powerful influence over them Dick, and will, no doubt, use it to good advantage. I tell you this is a disgrace for the brotherhood, and I am in for quelling the mob by main force, if they refuse to listen to reason."

"Well, such force is as dangerous as the evil; but I must go, so good bye."

That evening when supper was over, Richard started for the quarter which, according to the tailor's story, had been the scene of the disturbances the night before.

They could hardly have been as serious as Stitch intimated or the police would have interfered. True he had been too busy to read the local news, but felt sure that he would have heard of serious outbreaks, if any had occurred. It was a little after seven when he reached the neighborhood, which was inhabited almost exclusively by Irish, that is, the element which, according to the tailor's account, had caused the disturbance and was likely to renew it. He met with no scenes of manifest disorder, but there was a more than usual stir among the inhabitants. They sat in groups on their door steps, stood in knots around the lamp posts, or at the corners. The latter consisted mainly of men, and when Richard approached one of them, he was accosted with a noisy—

"Good evening, Misther Brown."

"Good evening," our friend replied. "What's going on? This is not St. Patrick's day in the morning?"

"No, surr, it be the divil's day in the evenin'."

A shout of laughter awarded this attempt at wit.

"You better look out then, my good fellow, 'tis after his imps the devil is, on such occasions."

"Then, what is it ye are after here, Misther Brown? Is it to spy out our doings, ye skulk about this neighborhood?"

"You must be drunk, man, to talk that way. You surely do not know me, or you would not rave such nonsense."

"May be I would, and may be I wouldn't. It is a civil tongue I would advise ye to keep in your mouth when ye crape around here. This ain't Dennis Court, you know."

The others winked to the speaker to desist, and Richard, who had no desire whatever to pick a drunken row, proceeded on his way. He passed the Irish quarter and entered a street principally inhabited by Italians, Hungarians and kindred nations of the southeast of Europe. Here the same excitement prevailed, but as he could not understand the remarks of the people as he passed, he only conjectured that the same cause had produced the same effect, viz., that doctrines sound and harmless in themselves, but misunderstood or perhaps purposely misconstrued, had stirred these ignorant people to a depth portending evil to order and peace What should he do? Should he stop and argue with people incapable of understanding, and much less comprehending him? It would be useless, and his heart was heavy and oppressed, as he retraced his steps, and finally stopped at Dennis Court. He ascended the stairs to the reading room, but found it empty. He picked up a paper, but laid it down as quickly as he had picked it up, and was on the point of leaving when little Fay came in and gleefully ran up to her friend.

"Where is mamma, Fay?" he inquired.

"Down stairs in the basement to get supper ready."

"Well, let us go and find her. I want to speak to her."

The child took the proffered hand and together they decended the stairs, and entered the basement, where they found Mrs. Duncan superintending as usual. After shaking hands, she said: "I am glad you came, Dick. I fear mischief

is brewing amongst these ignorant people, and as it is through the misapprehension of your teachings that this trouble has come, it is but right that you should know of it."

"I heard of the trouble, Alice, and have just returned from a walk through the rebellious district. I found the people noisy, but orderly, and really think that talk is all they will resort to."

"Mrs. Murphy does not think so. She says hard times and communistic ideas have set these people crazy, and she fears that they think of sacking and robbing the houses of the wealthy in the neighboring ward. There, do you hear that?"

It was the distant sound of many discordant and excited voices, which caused this question. Richard rose hastily, and was on the point of dashing from the building, when Alice took his hand and said imploringly: "Do not expose yourself rashly and foolishly, Richard. Stay here, these premises may soon need your presence and protection."

"I cannot stay, Alice. Tell Jim to close the large door of the gateway, and to stay on the premises. I must find out what this means, and perchance prevent mischief."

He hastened in the direction of the Irish quarter, guided by the ever increasing noise. It was half after eight now, and, short though his absence had been, the scene had changed greatly and for the worse. The men walked in squads in the middle of the streets, now swinging half empty bottles, singing songs full of obscene allusions, and uttering threats against all who possessed wealth and refused to surrender it. The women kept more on the side walks, but they were noisier than the men, swinging like them bottles with dubious contents evidently stronger than water, verifying Schiller's words, when he says:

"Da werden Weiber zu Hyaenen, und treiben mit Entsetsen Sherz."

Just at that moment Richard approached a place where an alley opens into the larger street. From this alley there dashed a carriage with a coachman on the box, whose palid face betrayed fear and consternation. He whipped his horses

as if his life depended upon their speed. He described so short a curve on reaching the wider streets that the inside wheels were raised from the ground, the vehicle threatening to upset for quite a while. The coachman leaned heavily to the left, until the carriage righted, when once more he whipped his horses, dashing through the crowd without any regard to their safety, until he disappeared in the distance. Richard saw how the maddened crowd picked up cobble stones and flung them after the carriage, but he failed to notice whether these missiles did any harm, for at that moment he reached the corner formed by the street and the alley, and looking down the latter saw a spectacle so thrilling as to rivet itself indelibly upon his brain.

About thirty feet from the corner a solitary lamp shed its light upon the nearest surroundings, its light forming a striking contrast with the darkness behind. This lamp was not placed upon a post like most street lamps, but on a bracket protruding three or four feet from the wall to the building. The lighted place was filled with women, but women so full of whiskey, and consequently so infuriated as hardly to deserve the name. In their midst stood a young woman—a girl hardly older than eighteen, clad in the materials used by the richer classes. Her head was bare, but a bonnet of costly material which an old hag swung threateningly in her face, showed that this head cover had probably been hers but snatched away in rough fashion, as braids of rich blond hair had fallen down her bosom, reaching far below her waist. A jacket in which she was clad had partly shared the fate of the bonnet, for one sleeve had disappeared and the other was torn to its full length. All these things, however, engaged Richard's attention only a moment, for the face of the girl soon attracted and held his gaze as if by magic.

She was a blonde, her disheveled hair gleaming in the light like gold, and her pure and clear complexion contrasting strangely with the darkness behind. Her face was pale, her lips compressed, and her eyes fixed upon the hags around her, who seemed to fascinate her much as the rattle snake is

said to fascinate little birds within its reach. Richard took in this sight like one in a dream, but suddenly the aggressive movements of the hags recalled him to the full consciousness of the situation, and the necessity of speedy action, if he did not want to see this victim torn to fragments by the mob. He hurried forward, and was just on the point of breaking through the circle formed by the hags, when he heard her say with a sweet but firm and strangely calm voice: "My friends, why do you treat me in this way?"

"And it is yer friends, indade we be, darling," cried the woman, swinging the bonnet in her hand. "We love yer so, that we shall take care of all them purty things for ye."

"I'll take care of this purty pin for yer."

With these words she snatched at the jeweled breast-pin, holding together the fragments of the jacket, while another made a dive at one of the earrings, and would probably have torn it from the ear, if Richard's hand had not interfered in season. Seizing the two hags, one with one hand, and the second with the other, he swung them back with a force which caused them and others behind them to tumble, and then cried sternly: "Back, you friends. Are you crazy, to thus treat a human being? Back, I say, and out of the way, or, by jove, I'll crush you like so many adders!"

The crowd recoiled, partly on account of the suddenness of the interruption of their sport, partly on account of the recognition of the intruder. "'Tis the tinker," some of them cried, increasing the distance from an adversary, whose powers had resounded through the neighborhood. Richard was aware that this awe would probably last only a short time, and undoubtedly be drowned in the fumes of whiskey. He knew also, that many hounds are the death of the hare, and that, once pursued by these infuriated hags, and impeded by the care for his protege, her escape at least would be highly problematical. He therefore seized her hand, and said hurriedly, while drawing her deeper into the shade of the alley: "This way, madam. And now be quick, for when these

devils have recovered from their shock, and start in pursuit, your life will not be worth much, I assure you."

"Nor yours, either," she replied with her former calmness, "You must not imperil it by loitering with me."

"Nonsense," he exclaimed impatiently, as if shocked at the very idea of such an imputation, and pulling her along as fast as he could without hurting her. "Hurry, I say, or they will be upon us before we know it. There," he added, looking behind, but still dragging her along, "I told you they would be after us. Run for your life, and get out of this quarter as fast as your feet will carry you, while I make a stand and beat them back. Run I tell you."

He had no time to see whether his injunction was obeyed, for at this very moment the drunken host came in sight whooping, yelling and screaming in a fashion which would have done credit to a legion of imps. They rushed forward with recklessness, which Richard would undoubtedly have admired on another occasion and in a nobler cause. As it was, he had no time for sentiments of any kind, for the foremost hag made a dive at his face and would probably have scratched out his eyes, if he had given her time. He saw plainly that this was no occasion for a display of gallantry, and that even a passive resistence would probably result in loss of limb, if not of life. So he gave the foremost hag a blow which sent her spinning to the dust. A second one took her place, and once more sharp nails aimed at the destruction of his organs of sight. A second blow—a second fall; but still they came whooping, yelling and gnashing their teeth in fury. His hands rose and fell like sledgehammers, every blow increasing the pile at his feet. But now he perceived that some endeavored to pass him, with the evident intention of attacking him in the rear. He set his teeth firmly, wishing for a hundred arms, but feeling that they would surely encompass him, and start in pursuit of the woman he had succored with so much risk and so much bravery, when suddenly a well known voice struck his ears, crying: "Take courage, Misther Brown, the by's of Dennis Court be coming to the rescue."

Then there was an onset on the hostile forces in front of him, followed by a wholesale slaughter, and then Jim Murphy, with half a dozen other tenants of the Court rushed forth, and surrounded our friend, who smiled pleasantly, saying: "Thanks, my lads, I won't forget this very soon."

"That's all roight, Misther Brown, but ef you'll take my advice, you won't stay here very long, you won't. The very air is full with them she devils, an' ef we stay long we'll have more of them at our hails, nor we can manage. But who is this little gal, surr?"

Richard looked quickly round and discovered to his surprise the lady, whom he believed far away.

"Did I not tell you to run for your life?" he asked, almost sternly.

"You did," she replied gently, "but I could not do it. I could not have forsaken you, if I had tried."

A queer sensation filled Richard's heart at these words so simple and yet so grand. He felt sorely tempted to scold, knowing full well that this disobedience might still involve this girl's life, but he could not find in his heart to chide this brave girl. If ever there was a heroine she deserved the title. For a moment he stood irresolute, meditating on the best way of getting out of their dilemma. Suddenly he said: "Here, don this coat of mine, then gather your braids, and force them under this hat. So, now boys, close around her, and let us see whether we can get out of this scrape. Stay in the dark as much as you can. Forward!"

On they went, following the alley to its intersection with the next street, where they turned to the left, mixing with the masses floating like a stormy sea up and down the streets. These were foes as well, but foes ignorant of their prey, and harmless until their discovery. "Shout like the best of them, Jim," Richard whispered in his friend's ear, while he himself began a boisterous song in a voice thick with pretended drunkenness. This ruse secured the approbation of the crowd and consequently the comparative safety of our party, although Richard did not breathe freely, until the riotous quarter lay

behind them, and the natural stillness of the night once more surrounded them.

"That will do, friends." Richard addressed his helpers. "I'll thank you some other time. Now your presence may be needed at the court. To-morrow morning I shall call there, to pay my debt."

"Now, don't yer be talking that there way, Misther Brown. Can't ye give a feller a chance of showing his gratification;" he meant gratitude. "Ye must not spake about payin', unless yer mean to make us mad, surr."

"That's what, Misther Brown," the other chimed in.

Richard was deeply touched. "All right then, friends. But now you must go to the court. Good night, boys."

"And now, where can I take you? I suppose the fellow who ran away with the carriage is your coachman?"

"He was, sir."

"But what possessed you to venture into that human vortex? Didn't you know your life would be imperiled?"

"I did not know it would be so bad as that," she said simply. "I had heard that there were needy people in that ward, and went to offer them my assistance."

"That was very kind, but greatly more imprudent. I shudder at the thought of your probable fate, if you had fallen into the hands of these intoxicated men. Death! Mere death would have been a blessing in comparison."

He felt her arm tremble in his, but she did not reply.

"Where shall I take you to?" he asked again.

She thought a moment, then replied: "Take me to the street car line, to Palace street, if you please. But let me first return your coat and hat. I will tie this handkerchief over my hair to avoid inquiries."

He relieved her of his garment, which he put on, then took his hat, and said: "Come."

The walk to the line in question consumed only a few minutes. Just as they reached it a car passed, and stopped on being hailed by Richard. He assisted her to the steps, when she inquired: "Won't you tell me your name?"

Richard hesitated. Why should she know his name, the name of a tinker, she the daughter of a wealthy family, no doubt? But she had asked it, so he said half aloud: "Richard Brown."

While he was speaking, the conductor pulled the bell, and this noise, together with that produced by the starting of the car, drowned his voice to such an extent, that he felt sure the girl had not understood him. Nor did he care much, for, when we state that the pale, resolute face haunted him on his way home, and for many a day to come, we do not mean to insinuate that his heart played any role in these visions. He admired the courage and firmness of a creature evidently frail and delicate, that was all. If you had asked him to describe her features, he would probably have failed, but nevertheless the pale figure, so calm and collected, so firm and so frail, so elevated above the brutality of its surroundings, remained indelibly engraved on his mind, and he treasured it as a precious memento, as something calculated to inspire and stimulate, although he did not expect or care to meet the original again on the intricate paths of an uncertain existence.

CHAPTER XV.

THE BRUTALITIES OF THE RICH.

When Richard glanced over the columns of the papers the next morning, he noticed sensational accounts of last night's disturbances, accompanied in most cases by leaders denouncing the new-fangled doctrines, causing them and the leaders who insisted on preaching them to the masses. A few conservative journals went even so far as to counsel the prosecution of these dangerous innovators, and one, known for its ultramontane tendencies, plainly intimated the necessity of a considerable increase of the regular army as the only means of preserving order and security of property and life.

It closed by relating an interview, which one of its reporters had had with the eminent statesman, Senator Cheatham. In this interview the Senator had said, that such a measure was absolutely necessary, and that he was prepared to introduce a bill to that effect in the Senate, as soon as the next Congress would convene.

Richard dropped the paper in disgust, but his brow was pensive, and he sat in meditation for quite a while. Then he muttered to himself: "All right, Mr. Senator, go ahead. Mines call for counter-mines. Let us see who will succeed in blowing the other out of the saddle."

Then he seized the pen and wrote the following lines, which appeared in the next issue of the "*Sentinel*," the organ of the brotherhood:

"We were very sorry, when we heard of the excesses in the Tenth ward, last Wednesday, as they can be indirectly traced to the doctrines promulgated by this paper, but we were infinitely more sorry, when we read the subsequent leaders of our press on this subject. We have always thought that fairness and impartiality form one of the most vital, nay indispensible traits of a journal, and therefore regret exceedingly to be compelled to state, that this trait is absolutely wanting in the articles alluded to. Our colleagues *know*, or ought to know at least, that the brotherhood condemns such outbreaks as much as the most conservative paper in the country. It has shown this aversion to lawlessness on every occasion. We need hardly call the attention of the public to the incidents of the bread riot of last winter, or the great fire, a few months later. On both occasions it was our brotherhood which preserved order, when the authorities despaired of such a possibility, and the brotherhood can, and will again offer its services for such a purpose, when the necessity arises.

But it is the doctrines we preach which cause these upheavings, you say, but your assertion is only negatively true, for it is not the promulgation of these doctrines, but their *criminal suppression* for ages which has produced the brutality manifested in these outbursts. We teach that all men are

born equal, and possessed of equal rights. Dare you deny the correctness of this principle? You dare not. You admit its justice in the abstracts, but refuse its application to present circumstances. We say that *all* men are bound to work for and in the interest of humanity. Do you deny the correctness of this principle? You *dare* not, but you say: "Some of us let their wealth work for them, which is equal to saying: some of us appropriated an undue share of the profits of labor, and now use these unfair profits to live in ease and luxury, thereby doubling the burden of our less fortunate or maybe, more scrupulous and conscientious fellows." We repeat, it is the long suppression of these doctrines which has done the mischief. It is true, their promulgation upsets the judgment of some of the victims of society, because society has withheld from them the means of progress and enlightenment, but we ask all fair minded men who bears the blame, the withholder or the restorer? The giving of healthy food to a starving man may endanger his life, but its prolonged withdrawal, will *surely* kill him. Is it therefore not better to run the smaller risk, remembering all the while that the refusal of such food deprived the individual of self control?

Obnoxious gases rise from ill drained and badly sewered cities, and if you apply a match to these gates a dreadful explosion will occur. Does this threatening peril justify you to withhold light and fire altogether, thus instituting an eternal night, hostile to growth, and development and progress?

Nay, friends, be just; lay the blame where it belongs, and address your appeals to those who need an awakening to the grand truths of the day. But be sure to blow your trumpet loud enough, for even that of Gabriel is hardly powerful enough to rouse some of the Rip Van Winkles of our day."

On that evening, when Richard sought his aunt as usual, she said to him: "Dick, your affairs are becoming so complicated, not to say entangled, that I can no longer manage them successfully. Would it, therefore, not be wise and proper, if Richard Velder came home from his extensive trip

and saw to his affairs for a while at least? Dick the Tinker has been so industrious that his friends can well afford to do without him for a month or two. What do you think of that, and what do you say to it?"

"That the suggestions of Mrs. Laura Kean are very timely and appropriate. Indeed, Aunty, I have held similar views for some time, but it is only lately that things have shaped themselves in such a way as to make my return feasible. It is not only my affairs which need watching and straightening, but public affairs as well. Our foes carry themselves with schemes calculated to bind us more firmly, and it requires the intermingling with them to discover and foil their plots. So you may look for an early departure of the tinker for the West, and the subsequent arrival of Richard Velder."

"Do you really intend going west?"

"Yes, aunty. Duncan needs my assistance, and, then there should be a real arrival of the other chap, don't you see?"

"I do see, and hope you will disappear soon, to quicken the arrival of my nephew, whom I have not met publicly for ever so long."

"Well. The tinker will depart the day after to-morrow."

He did go, after taking such steps and measures as an absence of several months seemed to demand. Alice was both sorry and glad to see him go; sorry because she would miss cheering influence, counsel and assistance; glad because he would see her husband, and probably arrange for a speedy reunion of the little family, which had, however, been augmented by the arrival of a boy. Richard spent nearly the whole day in saying adieu, and on the next morning was whirled towards Lakopolis, where he arrived in safety nearly two days later, and met Duncan, who showed an almost childish joy at seeing his friend and co-worker. They drove to Duncan's lodgings, where they spent several days in meditations and consultations with other leaders of the brotherhood, and other work connected with the movement. Richard rejoiced at the

healthful condition of the order in that city. Its members were more enthusiastic and, in may instances more intelligent than those Richard had left behind, showing plainly that the mental growth as well as the physical, tended westward. The list of membership was fully as large, and many thousands had benefitted by Richard's hint, and formed into companies of militia. Duncan told him laughingly, that while the governor had not ventured to refuse the petition for arms, he had been very wary not to call these companies into active service.

"And now, Dick, what about the little woman?" Duncan inquired, after all these things had been attended to. "Don't you think I am entitled to an early reunion with her and the little ones?"

"I do think so, most earnestly and emphatically. If I send them here; would you like to locate permanently in Lakeopolis?"

"Indeed I would. There is more life and stir here than in the east, and if I returned there I would be afraid of sharing the fate of Rip."

"So much the better, for you are needed here. But what about tinkering? I really think that the soldering iron and the grindstone have outlived their usefulness in this instance."

"I wouldn't mind dropping them Dick," the other replied, with a laugh. "But what am I to substitute? I am more obnoxious to the upper crust now, than ever before."

"Never mind the upper crust. How would you like to start a gunshop, Charley?"

"A gunshop, Dick?" the other said startled by the unexpectedness of the suggestion. "I don't know the first principles of the art."

"But you could learn, Stupid, couldn't you? And couldn't you employ other men, that do?"

"Employ men? That would take money, and money."

"See here" Richard said with a laugh, shaking his friend's arm. "You say living here sharpens the wit. You do not

illustrate the truth of this assertion. Now listen attentively: The brotherhood needs arms, many arms, or may at least need them soon. I have a few thousand left which I will advance for the erection of a gunshop on a large scale."

"Ah!"

"He begins to see" Richard cried laughing. "Well it was about time."

"I *see* Dick, I *see* as well as any blind man now," Duncan said earnestly. "The idea is a grand one, but I am really so green in the art of gunmaking that I shrink from taking the responsibility."

"Don't be foolish, Charley. Besides, you might go into a shop for a while."

"You forget my taint."

"Go as a volunteer, willing to pay if necessary. In that way you will find no difficulty."

The friends discussed the further details of the plan, and then Richard made his preparations for returning. He applies soap and water so vigorously to his hair and beard, as to remove the deep brown, and restore the lighter color of Mr. Velder. Duncan stood by in utter amazement.

"You have been playing possum all this time," he cried.

"And why?"

Richard made him sit down, saying: "You have earned my confidence and shall know all. Listen."

He then gave a short concise account of his history and motives, keeping his friend in a continuous wonder and excitement. When Richard had done he exclaimed.

"Well, if that don't beat all. 'Tis a real novel, only more so. Now I begin to understand many things which were a little mixed and dark to me. I thought that Mrs. Kean was mighty accommodating to a mere tinker, and your Mr. Velder rather soft in squandering his money in such a loose manner. I see it all now Dick, I see it all, and switch me if you did not manage that mighty clever but you were right, it would not have done to admit the crowd into your secret: they would

have either distrusted or cheated you. Have you many confidents?"

"Only Gottlieb and Sophie."

"Well, keep it there, Dick, keep it there. You are safe with me, but take my advice and let the thing go no further."

"Of course not, but now farewell, good fellow. I'll come occasionally and see how you get along in gunsmithing."

The conductor cried "all aboard," and soon our friend was on his way back to Plutopolis. On the day of his return the papers of Lakeopolis had the following:

"Mr. Velder, the eminent inventor is in our midst. We learn that he has just returned from an extensive trip in foreign countries, and is on his way to Plutopolis to stay there for a while, at least. He started east on this morning's train."

We need not add that this news traveled much faster than he, and reached Plutopolis long before his arrival there. He hastened home without loss of time, and beat curious reporters and more curious acquaintances, sufficiently to meet and greet his friends affectionately. George was now four years old, and very glad to see his long missed uncle. Richard had seen his sister almost every day, but never conversed with her, and was therefore glad to find her mind much clearer, and less occupied by the one painful thought of her lost husband. True, she spoke of him but as one dead, and Richard entertained the hope that a few more years would fully restore the equilibrium of her mind.

Early in the evening a card was handed Richard, who had no sooner read the name, than he exclaimed: "Show the gentleman in, Marie." A minute later Maxwell stepped into the room, and was warmly welcomed by Richard, who said pleasantly: "Glad to see you, Maxwell. Aunt Laura, this is Mr. Maxwell, whom we, or rather I alone, met in Paris. Maxwell, this is Mrs. Kean, and this my sister, Mrs. Roberts."

The visitor shook hands with both ladies, and Richard noticed that his eyes turned to Elinor, whenever he believed himself unobserved. A bitter feeling rose in Richard's mind, shaping itself into something like this thought: "Why could

she not met such a fellow before? Why had that fiend in human form to come, and destroy both mind and happiness? Surely life is an unfathomable enigma."

Elinor did not mingle in the conversation, and Richard soon discovered that she was a riddle to the visitor, who seemed intoxicated by her beauty, then puzzled by her inanity. Richard resolved to inform him of his sister's mental condition at some future opportunity, without, of course, betraying the cause, thinking that such a course would be honorable, and calculated to check a passion, which might assume alarming proportions, if allowed to grow.

"Well, Velder, what is your programme for the remaining winter months?" Maxwell inquired during the evening.

"I hardly know."

"Well, you'll surely cultivate the belle monde of Plutopolis? From what I hear, these ladies have been shut up here for many a month, and if you are not careful you will be decried as a new Bluebeard."

"That must be avoided by all means. Well, I would not mind going out occasionally, but then I do not know anybody, and—"

"I would be delighted to introduce you to our 'elite,' if the ladies and you will permit me."

"Well, we'll see. Is there anything going on now?"

"Well, we have our reunions at Del Palino's, you know, the club house of our 'Jeuness dorée.' It is open every night and before the beginning of Lent a grand masked ball is to close the season. Everybody will be there, and I shall be only too happy to procure tickets for you. It requires the endorsement of a member to procure them."

"You are a member?"

"Yes, my name is on the list, but I do not go often, as the character of the entertainments, in truth, the habitues does not strike my fancy on the whole. I am a little more seriously and intellectually inclined."

"This 'Jeuness dorée' caters more to the body than the mind, eh?"

"Well, yes, it does. I don't pretend to be a saint, and not even a prig, I trust, but the sensuality, nay brutality of the amusements favored there, is distasteful to me."

"No doubt of it, my dear fellow, for you are a sensible chap. You say the club is open every evening?"

"Exactly. Shall we go there to-night?"

"It is rather late, and then I am a little stiff from my journey."

"An excellent reason for delaying our visit. As for the time, why it is early; our golden youth hardly ever appears before midnight. Well, shall we say to-morrow?"

"To-morrow, if you please."

"I shall call here, then, at half past nine. Good night."

At punctually half past nine, the next evening, Maxwell called at the Velder mansion. He found Richard ready for a start, and said: "It is rather early, and we'll hardly find anybody there, sir; but that makes no odds, as the building alone is worth a visit, and you can feast your eyes upon masterpieces of art of every description. I have brought my coupe along, so let us go."

They entered a handsome one seated carriage and were rapidly drawn towards that part of the city where wealth and fashion have domiciled themselves. After a ride of about half an hour, the coupe stopped before a brilliantly lit entrance, whence a fine, broad stairway led into the second, and, as Richard soon discovered, principal story. Everything betokened wealth and luxury, although Richard considered the taste not always the most refined. Fine marble statuary lined the pillared corridors, all nude, which in itself is no objection, but many of a conception and attitude highly sensual, if not voluptuous. Fine oil paintings adorned the walls, but they, too, appealed to the animal passions, not by an open violation of decorum, but that subtle insinuation which, like the gauzy cover, reveals more than it hides, and calls upon the imagination to complete what the eye fails to perceive. A strong perfume of eau de mille fleurs filled the atmosphere, and Richard said to his companion, as they loitered along the

corridor: "A temple of Venus Amathusia. Woe to the morals of the young man frequenting these haunts daily. Here good resolutions will melt like ice in the noonday sun."

"Are you not a little severe? I, for my part, I am not at all affected by either these sights, or this atmosphere."

"You say you are not a daily visitor. That accounts for it."

"I beg to differ. Would not the rareness of the charm increase its power?"

"Not in this instance. It is the constant influence of these enervating scenes which tells. Would you want an innocent sister to frequent these apartments?"

"Hardly," confessed Maxwell hesitatingly. "But stop your moralizing, Velder, for we are nearing the room where our fellows sacrifice to Dame Fortune."

"You mean, where they gamble?"

"Fie, what an ugly word?"

"But the truth. I thought gambling was forbidden in the code of Plutonia?"

"What an innocent boy you are, Velder. I never saw such intelligence coupled with such simplicity. Why, man, do you not know that the foot of the executors of the law is never seen in the halls of wealth?"

"I am only too well aware of it. But say," he continued, "I am not at all interested in gambling, and with your permission we'll visit some objects of interest to me."

"There it is again. Gambling! Man you are obdurate. Give the devil his due, and call it 'bucking the tiger.' Come you must see how bravely our young cubs face that ferocious beast."

"All right, then," replied Richard, and Maxwell was on the point of turning the door knob, when some one cried behind them: "Maxwell, one word if you please."

"Botheration," muttered the young man. "Well, step in while I talk to him. I'll be there in a minute."

Richard obeyed, and entered a room gorgeous in the extreme, but overladen, and offensive to a simple taste.

Velvet Brussels carpet of a flashy pattern covered the floor, gilt paper of the costliest quality, the walls. Heavy curtains of Lyons silk hung from the windows and pictures in massive gilt frames presented views of a character similar to those mentioned before. A faro table occupied the center, and smaller ones were scattered over the room. Easy chairs of luxurious patterns and finish invited to rest, and swelling divans running along the walls did the same. Articles "de vertu" were scattered promiscuously over stands and what-nots, and everything breathed voluptuous ease and indolence. Richard had no time to examine all these allurements in detail, for, just as he opened the door, another opposite to this was shut, and then a third one opened. As Richard turned to learn the cause of the last movement he saw a young man, evidently one of the attendants, advance towards him carrying a folded paper in his hand, saying, as he handed it to Richard: "Please, sir, Miss Antoinette told me to deliver this to you."

"To me?" Richard inquired wonderingly, but unfolding mechanically the paper which contained only a line or two. He was on the point of returning the slip, when his eye was attracted by some words which riveted his attention, and induced him to set aside all scruples and to read:

"Sweet Cyrus: Your girl in room 27 is as stubborn as a mule. I fear you will have to use force, or drug her, to obtain your purpose. Call to-morrow morning at eleven.

Yours devotedly,

ANTOINETTE."

For a moment Richard was at a loss what to do. He saw plainly that some villany was at work, probably meditating the ruin of some innocent girl. He saw, of course, that the paper was not intended for him, but for a fellow called Cyrus. But how had this mistake occurred? Was this messenger an awkward clown, or Antoinette so secure in this temple of of sensuality as to disregard all dictates of prudence and caution? He must venture a question to feel his way. So he inquired: "To whom did Antoinette tell you to give this?

"To the gentleman in the play room." Then, with a tone of alarm: "Ain't you the right party?"

"That's all right, James."

The man smiled. He was young, probably not over twenty-two and had an open, upright countenance, which Richard thought out of place here. He said:

"My name is Harry, sir."

"Ah! Are you a native of Plutopolis?"

"Born and raised here. My uncle is janitor of National Hall, if you know what this is."

"Ah, Mr. Rinehart?"

"You know him?" the youth inquired eagerly, a light beaming in his eyes. Richard saw that he had nearly betrayed his secret. To undo the mischief, he must make some explanation, and replied, therefore: "By reputation, yes. My name is Velder, and I own National Hall."

The light brightened in the eyes of the youth and he exclaimed with an ardor, showing plainly that the atmosphere of this place had not yet corrupted him: "Mr. Velder! I declare! Oh, I am so glad to meet and see you. Uncle thinks a sight of you, and says he wishes all rich men were like you."

"I am truly obliged to your uncle for his good opinion," Richard said, with a smile. "But say, are you a member of our order?"

"I bet I am—all of the boys here are," he added, looking cautiously around. "But you said, 'Our.' Does that mean that *you* are a member in spite of all your money?"

"I am, Harry, indeed; I am one of the founders."

The youth looked at him attentively, then said: "By George, I must have seen you before, though I can't for the world tell, where. If your hair was darker, and—"

"Well, never mind that, Harry," interrupted Richard, fearing that a prolonged consultation with his memory might put the young man on his track. "I want to see you in private—no not now, but to-morrow morning at ten in this room. Can you be here?"

"Certainly; we have little or nothing to do in the morning."

"All right then. Somebody is coming."

The door opened and Maxwell entered. "All by yourself? I wonder where the Cubs are to-night. Harry, have you seen any of them?"

"I saw Mr. Cheatham, General Runwell, and—"

"The Senator?"

"No; Mr. Cyrus Cheatham. I think you will find them in the billiard room."

"Well, let us hunt them up, Velder. This way, if you please."

He opened a door and entered a room as gorgeously furnished as the other, but equipped with several billiard tables, at one of which two gentlemen lazily pursued a game.

When the door opened, they looked up, and one of them exclaimed: "Ah, there is Maxwell. Deucedly glad you came, the general and I are bored to death with ennui. Billiards is a bore, you know."

Maxwell seemed acquainted with the other, for he shook hands, saying. "How are you, General? Permit me to present Mr. Velder—Mr. Velder, General Runwell."

Both gentlemen acknowledge the favor by a bow. Maxwell continued, "The other gentleman met in Paris, if I am not mistaken."

Richard bowed slightly, but Cheatham remarked: "Think we did. Glad to meet you here Mr. Velder. But say, fellows, let's have a game of poker to kill time. Don't see how I shall survive midnight, unless I get a little excitement. What do you say. Shall it be poker or faro?"

"Neither, as far as I am concerned," said Richard coldly.

"I, too, must decline," chimed in Maxwell.

"Well, then suggest something else" remarked Cheatham Jr., peevishly. "Don't you see, I am dying for want of something to do? Come, have pity on a fellow."

At this moment half a dozen young gentlemen burst into the room, feigning the manners of the London swell, using

his "aw's," imitating his swagger and disgusting people of sense generally.

"Here they aw' at lawst" one of them cried. "Cy, why in the world awn't you in the kennel? Don't you remembaw this is the evening of your bet with Singaw?"

"The deuce it is. This ain't the twentieth?"

"That's what it is, Cy," another chimed in. "It is just a quartaw to ten, and if you hurry you can still make it."

"By George, let's be off, then. It is a cool thousand which I can hardly afford to lose by not coming to the scratch."

"Yes, let's all go," said a third one. "'Tis beastly dull and the fight will help us over a few idle minutes."

The others echoed these sentiments, and the crowd started for the kennel, Maxwell followed, and dragging Richard, who did not exactly know what to expect, but remembered that he had come here for information, and thought one place as good for that purpose as another. The company descended a flight of back stairs, and soon entered a spacious room lined with kennels on all sides in which dogs of all kinds were chained. On entering they noticed a gentleman who looked at his watch, and at sight of Cheatham, smiled ironically, saying:

"Just in season, Cy. Five more minutes and the thousand would have been mine by default."

"Well, they ain't, though. Here is Cæsar, bring out your Caro."

The other complied, and no sooner had the two dogs been set free, than they rushed against one another with a fury as if—as if—we came very near saying, as if they had been human beings. It is indescribable with what zest they inserted their teeth into the adversary's flesh. After a few minutes blood began to flow freely and soon their heads, necks, and sides presented one mass of mangled flesh. Richard's heart sickened at the sight, and more than once he was tempted to spring between the infuriated brutes. Nor was it the fear of resistance or ridicule on the part of these sports, which pre-

vented, but considerations of a more weighty character. He remembered the slip which the waiter had handed him, and his desire to watch the machinations of these human sharks, and to unearth any measure they might have concocted, or be concocting to the detriment of his comrades.

So he watched with a deep compassion, but in perfect silence, the struggle of these savage and therefore excusable quadrupeds, but with infinite disgust and ill-suppressed indignation, the coarse jests, the beastly exultation and almost frantic expressions of glee or regret of the brutal bipeds, who in his opinion, had sunk below the poor creatures tearing each other to pieces for their recreation. At last Caro with one mighty effort, grasped Cæsar by the throat and actually strangled him to death, to fall shortly after, a victim to the many and deadly wounds inflicted by his foe.

"The fight is off," cried General Runwell, who was umpire. "I declare Caro victor in the combat."

"By Jove! they were game," cried a half fledged youth. "I wouldn't have missed that fun for a hundred dolaws. Cy, you'll have to make a deep dive into your pocket to square the account. Wouldn't like to be in your boots, just now, 'pon honaw."

The others also chaffed Cheatham, who pretended to be indifferent to his loss as well as these taunts, but showed a scowl, telling a different story.

"Gents," cried the half-fledged youth, "don't fawget that Jim Sullerban and Joe Smithers meet to-morrow morning, for a purse of $500 each. I have bet on Jim. Any one weady to take me up?"

"Yes, Alf, I'll go you an even fifty."

"I'll take you up. But, it is getting late, gents, and if we don't hurry, we cawn't have that little game of pokaw, we promised Cy."

"All right, let us go up," cried Cheatham, who seemed anxious for a change of scene, and a new exitement, to efface the recollection of his loss. So the fellows rushed up, Max-

well, the General and Richard forming the rear at a more moderate pace.

"Poor brutes!" our friend could not help exclaiming.

"You mean the dogs?" Maxwell asked quizzingly.

"Of course, the others do not deserve any compassion."

The General looked at him searchingly. You take no stock in such fights, it seems?" he inquired cautiously.

"Who would, and call himself a man?" Richard replied frowning severely and looking all he meant.

"That's hard on our set," Maxwell said significantly.

"Beware, or some one may invite you to a passage at arms."

"I wouldn't care much, and shoot my adversary with considerably more mercy than was shown these poor dogs to-night."

"Yes, you would brain him sure," Maxwell cried with a laugh. "General, you ought to see Velder's skill with firearms. I bet you he will cut the spot out of an ace of diamonds a hundred times, running."

"You are joking of course, replied the military man."

"Of course *not*, you mean. Nor is this all. I bet he will touch you a hundred times with a foil, and not be touched once."

"Why Maxwell, you surely have a poor opinion of my skill as a fencer," the General replied slightly vexed.

"I know nothing about your skill, General, but—"

"Shut up, Maxwell, will you," Richard said laughing, but evidently at his friend's enthusiasm. "The General will surely think you are from the West."

"And why from the West, sir?"

"Because it is so windy there."

Both Runwell and Maxwell laughed. "I'll pardon this severe thrust, Velder," the latter remarked, "if you will consent to give the General a proof of your skill. You do not want to buck the tiger. So we can do nothing better than visit the shooting gallery and try our luck."

"Yes do, Mr. Velder," the General urged. "I would really see you shoot a hole into Maxwell's bag."

"That settles it" Maxwell cried with well feigned indignation. "If you fail to prove my veracity, I'll cut the cable of friendship binding us."

"All right then, I cannot endorse the thought of such an amputation."

So they went to the gallery, where they found half a dozen men engaged in shooting, fencing and boxing. A gleam of pleasure came into Richard's eyes, and he soon forgot what brought them here, in the genuine enjoyment of these manly sports. At first the others paid no attention to our trio, but when Richard began to fire and the General's exclamations of surprise and delight became more vociferous with every shot, they approached and also became witnesses of the skill of our friend. When he had fired about twenty shots, Maxwell exclaimed. "Well General will you bet now?"

"Not I, sir. Mr. Velder must have formed a league with the devil."

"Three of them, General." Maxwell exclaimed with a laugh.

"And they are? I would like to get an introduction to them."

Maxwell paused a moment, then said: "His devils are: Moderation, coolness and practice."

Most of the crowd laughed, but the General said seriously, "Mighty powerful devils, these. It is a pity they are so rarely invoked."

"That's so, General. Well, I have proved one of my assertions, and will now inquire: Does any one of the gentlemen present wish to be spitted on this foil by Mr. Velder and roasted on a slow fire. If so let him speak and I will intercede for him."

"Maxwell!" Richard cried warmly.

"Well, I must recover my character you know. Here are two foils, General, will you take one?"

"I suppose I'll have to save the honor of the army. I

begin to believe though, you were really born in the extreme East Maxwell, for if this gentlemen will do half as well with the foil as with the revolver, I shall have no show. Ready! Well, here she goes."

It was a pleasure to see the ease, assurance and steadiness with which Richard went into position. When General Runwell saw the calm steel-blue eyes take his measure, watching his every movement with the vigilance of the hawk, anticipating his intentions almost before they had taken definite shape, he vowed to himself that he would avoid a quarrel with this man if he could possibly help it. Nor did the steady bearing, the lightning rapidity, and the consumate skill of our friend fail to impress the spectators. Richard's antagonist was not unskilled in the use of the foil, having practiced with it considerably at North Bend, the military school of Occidentia; but both he and the spectators soon discovered that he was no match for Velder. He tried his best to touch him, and his original coolness gave way to a pardonable excitement and vexation when he found that he not only failed, but that the latter actually played with him. The excitement, however naturally decreased his chances, and when finally the half-fledged chap exclaimed: "Give it up, General, havn't no chance at all, you see," he was wise enough to throw away his weapon saying with a forced laugh:

"I consider such a defeat an honor."

"And I such a victory a triumph," Richard added good naturedly. "The General is a good deal above the ordinary run, and kept me in breath I assure you gentlemen."

Maxwell was greatly gratified. He had two objects in view. He was glad to see his veracity thus established, but his anxiety for Velder's interests overshadowed greatly the gratification of his self-love. He could not help seeing that his friend felt, and openly manifested a contempt for the frivolity of this "gilded youth," which could not help provoking irritation and lead to feuds. He was therefore glad to exhibit a skill calculating to make a quarrel with Velder a perilous affair. He knew that some of these fellows had the

true mettle in spite of their foppishness, and on such the knowledge of Richard's dexterity in the use of weapons would have little or no effect, but the mass was effeminate and enervated, and for this mass Maxwell's lesson was intended. They would now give a wide berth and show a scrupulous civility to a man far above them.

When the foils had been laid aside, Maxwell said with an assumed innocence. "Now, friends, we ought to close with a friendly passage with gloves. Who will meet on the arena where Jim and Joe gained immortal glory?"

The half fledged youth accepted his challenge but both combattants exhibited such inferior skill that the spectators yawned, and began to turn their backs.

"Now, 'tis your turn Velder" Maxwell exclaimed, thus re-exciting the expectation of the crowd.

"General, will you try your luck with him?"

"You go to Halifax!" Runwell cried with an emphasis, which created universal merriment.

"One defeat satisfies me perfectly, and if any of these gentlemen wish to be pommeled to their heart's content, I cheerfully stand back."

Maxwell then offered the gloves first to one, then to another of the spectators, but, somehow, there seemed to be no disposition to be "pommeled," so Maxwell threw them away, saying: "Well, gents, if there is nothing more to be done here, let us go to Dame Fortune's temple and see how Cy is being fleeced."

This summons caused a sudden rush on the part of the younger sports, who should have been tucked into bed by their mammas by this time, as Maxwell whispered to Richard while following more slowly. They found the play room empty, but boisterous laughter and shouts of merriment indicated too plainly the route of the gamblers, to be mistaken. Richard expressed a desire to retire, but Maxwell pulled him forward, saying impressively: "Ah, come on. They are in the bar-room, where you can and should study another chapter of human life."

"I fear it will be a disgusting one; but have your way. I said A, so I suppose I'll have to say B."

They soon reached the bar-room, or banquet hall as some fastidiously called it. The apartment was more gorgeously embellished than even the other rooms. The divans were more swelling, the pictures and statuary more voluptuous, the glitter of gold and cut glass more brilliant.

Small tables were scattered around the room, with chairs around them, occupied by the devotees of Bacchus. At one of them, which was empty, Maxwell sat down, inviting Richard and the General to follow his example. He ordered a bottle of champagne, and pouring out the sparkling liquid, said: "This, in my opinion, is the king of drinks. I confess to a slight passion for champagne, and would probably cater to it more frequently, if it were not so beastly expensive." Then they entered into a light and rambling conversation, Richard taking little heed, but watching the company which, with few exceptions, had reached a stage of mild intoxication.

The waiters of this room were girls, handsome girls, of course, but dressed in so flimsy a fashion as to betray their lewdness, even if their presence at this place had not foretold it. The devotees, especially the more juvenile ones, paid homage to these Venus' es Valgatas, pinching their arms and cheeks, and occasionally drawing them into an embrace. Richard was on the point of rising, when suddenly a voice at the table, just back of him, claimed and, after a few minutes, riveted his attention.

"Well, Cy, so you broke the bank? Lucky dog, that you are. You must have made a big haul?"

"Just about enough to pay——, hic, Ben, hic."

"Well, I am glad you were lucky for once. They drain you pretty regularly, you know."

"I don't care, hic! The Gove'nor has the change, you know, hic!"

"I know, Cy, and I could say the same thing of mine. They tell me, Cy, you are universally successful with the fair sex, Cy."

"Unlucky in play, lucky in love you know, hic."

"That's what they say; but they say also, Cy, that you are about as fickle as you are lucky."

"Well, what can a fellow do, 'tis constitutional, hic, you see. What can a fellow do when he is bored?"

"Bored? Handsome women wouldn't bore *me*, I tell you."

"Yes, they would, hic. Antoinette, another bo'tle of champagne. Yes they would, my boy, especially if they were dull, hic. I had once an amour with the han'smest girl in th' city, by Jove, but she was dull, and I cast her off, hic."

"Tell me awl about it, Cy, it is deucedly interesting to heaw you tawk."

"Well, there ain't much about it, hic. Her name was Elinor, and she was an orphan, hic. There was the dragon of an aun', aunt, hic; but we circumvented her, hic, and took her off."

"We? Had you a pawtner in the affair, Cy?"

"Course not, hic. He merely played preacher, hic, you know."

"Ah, then you married the girl, did you?"

"Course I didn't, hic. Only sham, you know, hic."

"And she bored you soon?"

"Devlish soon, hic. After a few months, hic, I couldn't stand it any longer, hic, an' lef' her in Shoatopolis, you know, hic."

Richard's feelings during this conversation can more easily be imagined than described. He thought he had passed through fiery ordeals in his comparatively short career, and flattered himself to have endured them with credit; but this one put the climax unto them all. The fact that the same blood and flesh which had wrecked his parents' happiness and life had also prevailed in destroying the happiness and the mind of his sister, probably intensified his feelings; at all events the fiery wrath, the terrible indignation now raging in his soul, surpassed by far the sensations which had shaken him, when first he stood face to face with the destroyer

of his parents. In the father's case there had at least been a provocation, a cause, which, though unjustifiable, had roused the fury of an evil nature, and thus led to the terrible sequel. In this instance, there had been no such provocation. An idle mind, an over-fed body, thus filled with lewd passion, had calmly, deliberately planned and coldly consummated a villanous plot. And when the base passion had been gratified; when the plaything of an idle month had become tiresome, it had been flung aside without compunction, without any afterthought, excepting perhaps that of satisfaction at the skill and cunning displayed in the deviltry.

These thoughts and feelings rushed promiscuously and wildly through Richard's brain. He was aware that the vermin that had thus poisoned an innocent existence, was within his grasp. He felt that it would give him infinite satisfaction to seize it, crush it under his feet, and thus free the world from its further contamination. But while he felt this, he never for a moment forgot that his life had a purpose; that it belonged to countless beings, who, it is true, might accomplish their emancipation without his aid, but who had nevertheless a claim upon him. So potent was this feeling in him, that he did not waver one moment, checking his fierce desire with the superior consciousness of duty. He felt, however, that there was no necessity for a continued self-torture; so he arose, saying:

"Maxwell, it is after twelve, I shall retire."

"Well, I shall go with you, as I have business to-morrow requiring a clear head and a steady hand. Good night."

On the following morning Richard entered his aunt's room and startled her by saying: "Aunt Laura, I have found him at last."

"Found whom, Richard?"

He went close to her, then said with an attempt of calmness: "Elinor's ravisher!"

Mrs. Kean paled. Without knowing what she was doing, she rose and said, gasping for breath. "Merciful Heavens. Is it possible! Are you sure, Richard?"

"As sure as a confession from his own lips can make me."

"When I tell you his name, Aunt Laura, you will hardly wonder."

Mrs. Kean clutched at a chair and in search of support, then said:

"Richard, don't torture me. Who is it?"

"The offspring of the man who killed my parents" he cried bitterly; "Cyrus Cheatham."

Mrs. Kean's head reeled. "Cyrus Cheatham" she said automatically, as if hardly aware of her doings, then arousing herself with a powerful effort, "And they say there is a ruling Providence, kind and benevolent."

"I doubt it, Aunt Laura—I doubted it long ago."

"And—and, what are you going to do with him, Richard?"

"I have not decided, aunty."

"Then you do not propose to kill him?"

"What good would his death do her? True, it would prevent him from wronging others, but for her sake he must live, live for a while at least."

"Will you compel him to repair the wrongs he has done her?"

"Can he restore her mind? I place little value on what the world calls vestitution of sullied honor. In my eyes poor Elinor is as honorable now, as when wedded to him. But let us drop the subject. I thought it right to post you, to understand any action I may take in the matter. Now that we have him and can confront him with her, we might consult the physician again. Perhaps they will think her sufficiently strong now to bear a shock which, at a previous period might have killed her. But, to repeat it, let us drop this painful subject."

"I want your aid in a little plot I have conceived to save the last victim of his lust."

He then narrated to her the lucky error of last night, and asked in conclusion: "Can I count on your assistance Aunt Laura?"

"Of course you can. What do you wish me to do?"

"Engage the carriage, and cause yourself to be taken to the main entrance of Del Polino. Provide yourself with a heavy veil, and another for the girl; also with a bonnet and a mantle for her, as she may need these articles."

"When must I be there?"

"Precisely at half past ten. I must leave you now, to provide for other matters connected with this scheme. Good bye."

"Good bye, my son, and may good spirits guide and help you."

Richard left, wending his steps first towards the headquarters of police. On his arrival he interviewed the chief, saying: "I require the assistance of a discreet detective. Understand, *discreet*. I shall probably not need his interference, and only want him as a reserve."

"I understand. Is it a scandal of high life?"

"Something of that sort. I may as well tell you, that one of the young bucks has imprisoned an innocent girl at Del Polino, with intentions which I need not point out to you."

"Why, that is really going a little too far," the official said with an air of vexation. "You understand, that we have sometimes to shut an eye to their doings, but too far is too far. How did you discover the intrigue?"

"By a slip handed me by mistake."

"Ah, yes, I see, and I approve of your intention to oppress this scandal and to content yourself with the rescue of the girl, With whom have I the honor to—

"My name is Velder."

"Richard Velder, the millionaire?" the chief cried, assuming a much more respectful attitude.

"Richard Velder, the inventor," said the young man coldly. "I place no value upon the title you apply to me."

"'Tis a powerful one, though," the chief said with a smile. "Splaine can you come here a moment?"

A middle aged man entered the office from an adjacent

apartment. He looked respectable enough, but more like a well-to-do baker, than a detective.

"Splaine," the chief, addressed him, "Mr. Velder here wants your assistance in a little scheme. He will enlighten you himself, and I only add, that I shall sanction anything he proposes."

"Now?" the detective inquired laconically.

"Yes, now," Richard replied. "I need hardly add, that I shall reward your services handsomely."

"Very well, Mr. Velder, I am at your disposal."

They left. On the way to the club rooms Richard told his companion all he needed to know. "You stay outside," he said, "and abstain from making yourself conspicuous. Your presence may suffice, and I not need your service at all, which, of course will make no difference as to the pay; please remain within hailing distance."

"Ay, ay," was the response, and Richard ascended the stairs. In the billiard room he found Harry.

"Are we safe from interruption here?" he inquired.

"Oh, yes, our patrons never bother us at this hour, sir."

"Well, I am glad. Harry, I know I can trust you, for your uncle's name and character are sufficient guarantee."

"I am glad you think so. I wouldn't like anything better than to do a good turn for Mr. Velder."

"All right, then, Harry. The slip you handed me last night was not intended for me, but as it revealed a plot against the innocence of a girl, the blunder was a lucky one."

"Whew!" whistled Harry.

"That *was* lucky. Ain't they a bad lot though. I think I'll clear out here before long."

"So would I if I were in your place. But don't be in a rush, Harry. I suspect that they are plotting against the people here, and I want your aid in ferreting out their schemes."

"And you can count on me, and all our fellows, in fact. There ain't but two or three that don't belong to the brotherhood."

"So much the better; but you see I can't and won't confide in Tom, Dick and Harry."

"Yes you can and do confide in Harry," the young man said, with a laugh.

"I stand corrected. Well let's keep Harry and throw the rest overboard."

"But what do you expect me to do in this matter?"

"Nothing except to call Miss Antoinette, when I tell you. For the rest, you know nothing at all about this business, for if they suspected any duplicity on your part, they would give you the grand bounce in less than no time."

"I see. When is this thing going to come off?"

"Right away. Let me see. What time is it?"

"Just half past ten."

"All right, you stay here until I return."

With these words Richard left the room, and descended the large stairway. Before the entrance he saw a carriage, to which he walked, assisting a densely veiled lady to alight. He offered her his arm and said guardedly, while leading her to the entrance: "You see the man leaning against the post?"

"I do."

"Well, he is a detective. Take a good look at him, to recognize him, in case his services are needed."

They ascended the stairs in silence, and proceeded to the billiard room, where Harry was in waiting, looking expectantly at his new friend.

"Harry," Richard said, with a purposely loud voice, "can you find Mademoiselle Antoinette for me?"

"I think I can," he replied, and left the room.

"Do not take offense at her repulsive familiarity, Aunt Laura," Richard said cautiously. "Remember that the patrons of this haunt have taught her to impute the lowest motives to their actions."

She merely nodded, and a minute later the person he had

sent for entered. She made a deep courtesy, saying: "Bon jour, Monsieur. Vat can I do for yon?"

"I want a room, Mademoiselle."

"She cast a knowing look at the veiled figure, then said: "Je comprends, I understand. Has Monsieur une préférence?"

"Let me see. Yes, I would like to have twenty-seven."

The woman started, then said, collecting herself: "Je suis fâchée, I am soree, but twenty-seven is engaged." Richard resolved upon a new venture.

"Well then, twenty-six or twenty-eight. Is either of them vacant?"

The woman laughed; "Ah, Monsieur has been there before. Yes, twenty six is at his service. Weel he have the kindness to follow me?"

She led the way from the room until she reached a spacious elevator, luxuriously furnished, into which she invited the couple with a gesture of her hand. They were rapidly lifted to the fourth floor, here the girl or woman resumed her office as guide, traversing several corridors, and finally stopping at a door bearing the number 26. She inserted a key into the lock, flung open the door and said, with an insinuating smile and inviting gesture: "Entrez: Beacoup de plairsir, Monsieur."

She was on the point of retiring, when Richard exclaimed, pointing to something behind the door, as if displeased with what he saw: "What does this mean?"

The woman standing outside could not see what he intimated. So she stepped into the room, her face showing wonderment and expectancy. When she was inside Richard closed the door, and turning to the woman said sternly: "Mademoiselle, I want to say a word or two to you. Who is in the next room?"

The woman shrank back in sudden fear and said, "what does Monsieur mean? Nobody is in that room."

"You know you lie, and said yourself a few minutes ago it was occupied."

"Oh Monsieur, I swear—"

"Don't perjure yourself. You need not tell me who is there, for you informed me last night. Do you recognize this slip?"

She gave a scream and made a dash at the paper. Warding her off, he resumed: "I know all about it, and have taken my measures accordingly. There are two courses open to you. The first is, to scream and alarm the building—the second, to unlock the door of 27 and deliver the prisoner into our keeping. Before you decide let me tell you, that the offense of kidnapping an innocent girl is punished with a long term of imprisonment in the penitentiary here, and that an officer of the police is waiting down stairs to arrest you. Now, Mademoiselle, decide."

"But I shall call upon Monsieur Cyre to protect me."

"You may do as you please in that respect, but you are more likely to secure for him also a term in State prison."

Mademoiselle remained silent, pondering in her mind the chances for an escape from this dilemma. Richard understood her, and said firmly. "No evasions Mademois. I'll give you one minute to decide. When it is up I shall send for the officer."

He took out his watch to time the seconds, planting his foot at the same time so firmly against the door, as to make an attempt to escape futile. Half the time of grace had expired, when the woman cried with real anguish: "But what will Mr. Cyre say? He will kill me."

"He need not know. Tell him any story you please, that she's escaped during the night, or something to that effect."

"He won't believe me," she cried wringing her hands.

"Perhaps he knows the measure of your veracity. Break the lock, tear the bedsheets, or something of that sort. I want to save this girl, but I do not wish to ruin you; so make up your mind to any invention you desire to adopt. But quick, because I'll not fool much longer, I assure you."

She wavered a moment, then said: "If Monsieur will help me. I'll do his bidding. What does he propose to do?"

"Give me the key of 27."

A gleam of light shot from her eyes. She probably thought he would unlock the door, and prepare the prisoner for flight. In that case, she would escape, alarm her confederates, and probably capture the intruder in his own trap. She handed him the key readily, but was sadly disappointed, when she saw him give it to his companion, saying merely: "You go; I'll have to watch her."

Richard remained in his position, one foot against the door, and both his eyes keenly fixed upon Mademoiselle. Voices became audible in the neighboring room, but the words exchanged could not be understood. After ten minutes they ceased, and shortly after two veiled figures made their appearance in the room. Richard said: "Ah, here you are, madam, you will please descend to the pavement and await my coming. I shall only tarry to assist Mademoiselle in her 'ruse de guerre,' and then follow without delay." The woman who had come with Monsieur now took the other's arm, and disappeared around the corner of the next corridor. Then they heard the bell of the elevator and a moment later they felt the slight tremor caused by the descent of the concern. Richard waited five more minutes, then he addressed Mademoiselle, saying: "Now, let us go to 27. I'll break the lock and damage the door sufficiently to give your story the appearance of likelihood. Come on."

Mademoiselle was completely cowed by this time. She saw that a cry for help at this late hour would only make matters worse, and resolved, therefore, to make the best of it, and benefit by the assistance which this dreadful fellow had offered. She followed him to the other room, and while he dilapidated the lock beyond recovery, she tossed up the bed, and scattered the furniture in such a way as to create the thought of a desperate determination, if not struggle.

"So," he said, "that ought to do. I wish you luck, and

trust you will escape without injury. To wish your reform and the return to decency and virtue, would probably be mere wasted breath. Adieu, Mademoiselle."

With these words he left her, and rapidly gained the pavement, where the carriage was still in waiting. "Drive home, aunty. It is all right. I have to settle with Mr. Splaine, but shall be home for dinner."

So off the carriage rolled, while Richard turned to the detective, and said, handing him a ten dollar bill: "I am very much obliged for your assistance, Mr. Splaine. When I need an officer again, I shall take pleasure in calling on you."

"Do," the man said, with a grin. "It ain't often that such light work pays so handsomely."

Richard said good bye, and then taking a street-car, returned home, where Mrs. Kean was awaiting him with an impatience so feverish, as to create the wonderment of the servants and to attract the notice of her nephew as soon as she entered her room. She ran to meet him, drew him into a sofa, and cried. "Richard, this is strange, stranger than fiction, stranger than any story I ever read. Do you know whom you rescued from such a peril?"

"I do not; but from your excitement, am prepared for something quite remarkable."

"You are right, Dick, quite right, but can't you guess?"

"Never was very good at guessing, aunt. Hadn't you better tell me? For *your* sake, I mean, seeing that you will burst, if you don't unburden soon."

"Dick, burst isn't a nice word at all, and as a merited punishment, I ought to tantalize you a little longer, but I'll forbear and tell you. The rescued maiden is Bertha Rasmussen."

That announcement *was* evidently unexpected, for Richard sprang to his feet, crying excitedly: "You don't mean it?"

"I *do*, every word of it. Isn't it wonderful, Dick?"

"Strange indeed, if true."

"It *must* be true, for she gave me this name, and could

she, if it were not hers? She did not know your interest in such a girl."

"That sounds reasonable, but this is really so strange that I can hardly grasp it. Well, tell me all about it, aunty, and quick, for we should gladden the heart of the old man with the news as soon as possible."

"You are right, my son. Well, this is her story: When I first went into her room she looked at me like a frightened doe, and was inclined to distrust me. No wonder; the rascality practiced upon her would have turned honey into wormwood. I told her I had come to rescue her, and urged her to put on the veil, and wrap herself in the mantle I fetched her. She finally obeyed, quite bewildered by the sudden turn her fortune seemed to take. When we were seated in the carriage, she burst into a flood of tears, saying amidst convulsive sobs: 'I trust you mean me no harm, madam. I have been so wretched, so miserable, that another deception, would—would surely kill me.' "

"I embraced the poor girl, soothed her in every way I could think of, and succeeded in restoring her to comparative quietude by the time we reached the house. I took her at once to my room, made her comfortable in one of Elinor's suits, and forced her to eat a bite, and drink a glass of wine, having forced from her the confession that she had not tasted food for nearly twenty-four hours."

"The fiends."

"Nay, they gave her food, but her state of mind impelled her to reject it. After partaking of the victuals she felt better; so I asked her who she was, and where she lived. I need not tell you how surprised I was when she told me her name was Bertha Rasmussen."

"It is strange; but proceed: How did she get there?"

"That is all I know. She had just told me her name when I heard your step, and hastened to communicate to you' my startling discovery."

"Let us see her, then, that is, if she is strong enough for such an interview."

"I shall see. She lies on my bed; wait my return here, Richard."

She entered an adjoining room and a minute later returned with their young protege leaning upon her arm. Richard saw a very handsome girl of the most pronounced blonde type, standing before him. It was the pure type of the extreme north, in almost faultless perfection. Her complexion was snowy; hair of yellowness crowned her head, and eyes of the deepest azure beamed mildly upon him. Her lips and cheeks were pale, probably blanched by terror and grief, but Richard imagined that a rosy hue was wont to dwell there under ordinary circumstances, and felt a thrill of satisfaction at the thought of his power to recall these roses. When the two entered he rapidly arose, advanced a few steps and said, taking the hand of the girl: "I bid you welcome under our roof, Miss Rasmussen. Lay aside all fear, for you are perfectly safe under aunt's care."

Her eyes filled with tears. "Oh, I thank you," she cried, "I thank you with all my heart for—for taking me from that dreadful place. I—I—"

She broke down, and the tears flowed copiously over her cheeks. Mrs. Kean led her caressingly to an arm-chair, forcing her gently down, and said: "There now, my dear, do not think of it any more. The danger is past, and under our protection you need not fear its return. How do you feel now? Are you strong enough to tell us how you came to the city, in fact, all about you, to enable us to help you intelligently?"

"I am strong enough madam, but I have but little to tell. My parents lived at Four Roads Corner, a little village in the interior of the State. My father has been dead these ten years, and my mother"—she choked a little at this place—"followed him about eighteen months ago. She left little. Our place was encumbered to fully its value, so I wrote to an uncle living in Sweden, and begged his protection. Receiving no answer, I wrote a second time, then a third time. All in vain, and I finally came to the conclusion that he was dead.

I tried to make a living in the village, but the people are all of them poor, so I resolved to go to Plutopolis and try my luck there. I am skilled in sewing, and other little arts of that kind, and hoped to turn them to a better account here. I sold the few pieces of furniture I possessed, and bought a ticket for the city. On board the train I found a lady who pretended to take a lively interest in me and befriended me in a manner very agreeable to me. As I was inexperienced and dreaded the big city with its multitude of strangers, the lady persuaded me to go with her, promising me remunerative employment. Alas! I yielded but too readily, and fell without suspicion into the trap she had set for me. I would have fallen in, if it had been ever so clumsy, for I had never mingled with strangers, and was incapable of discerning between truth and deception. I was taken to that place last Monday, and—and—oh do not insist upon a description of the agony I suffered there by day and night."

"Of course not, my dear. Banish all recollection of the place from your mind, and rejoice at the certainty of peace and happiness, for rest assured Bertha, that we shall befriend you and secure for you a future free from care and harm."

"You are so good," she exclaimed fervently, folding her hands and looking from one to the other with volumes of gratitude in her beautiful eyes. "You are so good."

"Tut, tut," Richard exclaimed deprecatingly, "don't make us blush. By the way, you did not give us your Uncle's name."

"Professor Erric Andersen."

He knew the name, of course, but asked to introduce into her mind some hope and expectancy of finding her relative.

"Andersen? he echoed." "Why, I have read that name in the papers recently, and am almost sure a person bearing that name is in the city."

She rose excitedly. "Is it possible?" she cried, again folding her hands beseechingly. "Oh, take me to him then

or bring him here. He is my mother's brother, and so good, so good."

"Then you know him?"

"Only by his letters. But you will find him for me, good friends—will you not?"

"We shall try," said Mrs. kean, "but here is the dinner bell. Come dear, you have been starving for a week, and must try to regain your strength and buoyancy to cheer your uncle, when you meet him."

Youth is the period of intensity. Extreme sorrow jumps into ecstacy, and the reader need not marvel when we tell him that this fair creature rapidly revived under the kind and tender care of new friends. At dinner she was introduced to Elinor, and made the acquaintance of Master George, who at once vouchsafed to her his friendship and protection, and aided much in diverting her thoughts from the dreadful experience of the past week. After dinner Richard took up the paper and said, suddenly, with cheerful emphasis; "Why, Miss Bertha, here is an advertisement concerning you. Listen." And then he read to her the lines which he had caused to be inserted some time ago. She jumped up, dancing in glee, and crying: "O dear! O dear! Can it be possible. Say, Mr. Velder, can we go there at once?"

"We must be cautious, Miss Bertha. You may not find your uncle there, but only news concerning him, and if you find him, the sudden shock may hurt him. He must be tolerably up in years from what you tell us."

"Yes, nearly seventy."

"Well, then, let me manage this for you. I will use all the dispatch I can, and return soon, as the place is very near."

She submitted with good grace to his suggestions, but begged him to hurry with such pleading earnestness, that he snatched his hat and started for the grocery. He was a little dubious in regard to the efficiency of his disguise, or rather its removal, but trusted that a determined front would avert a dangerous inquisitiveness on the part of the Professor. In the store he inquired for Mr. Grad, and the busy clerks

directed him without the scrutiny which he had anticipated. "Kleider machen Leute," the Germans say, and his stylish and costly suit of the finest black broadcloth precluded so effectually of the comparison with the rough and poor clad tinker, that they failed to make it. Gottlieb accosted him civilly, but indifferently, telling him that he would find Mr. Andersen in the attic room of the new building. So up he climbed, and upon the inmate's summons, entered the room.

"Professor Andersen?" he inquired.

The old man started, eagerly expecting to see the person his memory associated with this familiar voice. At the sight of this elegantly dressed gentleman, who, moreover, observed a distant reserve, he started and said confusedly in reply to the other's salutation: "Excuse me, sir, I thought I expected to meet an acquaintance, whose voice is strangely like yours. What can I do for you? Be seated, if you please."

"You are the gentleman to whom this advertisement refers, I presume?"

The old man started again. "My name is Eric Andersen, and I am the party to which the advertisement refers. Can it be possible that Bertha has been found?"

"There are strong clues to her, at least. My name is Velder, I think you know my aunt, Mrs. Kean."

"Very well, and have heard much of you, sir. But will you please inform me of the nature of your discoveries."

"My aunt is better qualified to do so. Would it be too much of a trouble to accompany me to our house?"

"Of course not. I would go to the end of the world to find my niece. I am ready, sir."

They left the building, and were soon seated in Mrs. Kean's room. She shook hands with him, and said cordially: "I have good news for you, professor. The whereabouts of your niece have been discovered. Are you strong enough to meet her soon?"

"I am strong enough to meet her, madam," he said huskily, "but I am not strong enough to bear disappointment or

even suspense. So, bear with an old man, and do not torture him with well-meant caution."

"You are right, Mr. Andersen. Learn then, that your niece is in this building. I'll go and prepare her for this meeting." She returned after a short absence, leading by the hand the maiden who, in the old man's eyes, was fair as one of the houris of Mohamet's Paradise.

"Here she is," she said pleasantly, then turned and left the room, unwilling to mar the scene sure to ensue.

Shall we be less discreet, dear reader? Nay, let us follow her, and leave the pair, to enjoy undisturbed by our presence, one of the happiest moments of their lives.

CHAPTER XVI.

NOT ALL THAT GLITTERS IS GOLD.

Does the reader remember the brave girl so roughly handled by Billingsgate on the evening of the riot? If so, is he, beg pardon, *she*, not anxious to learn more of her? Yes. Well, let us retrace our steps, and follow her into the street car, where her dilapidated appearance created some surprise and even comment. True, she had thrown away her torn jacket before entering; but the absence of a head dress and the crumpled condition of her dress, could not help attracting attention.

"Had an accident, miss?" the conductor inquired on collecting the fare.

"The horses ran away," she said quietly. "Please stop for me corner Fortieth."

"At the Cheatham mansion?"

"Corner Fortieth, I said," she replied so emphatically, that he refrained from further remarks, stopping in due season at the corner indicated. When she had alighted, he went to the driver in front and said emphatically, but in a confidential undertone.: "I'll be blasted if that wasn't Miss Cheatham

herself. Wonder what row she has been in. Looked quite used up *she* did."

"Didn't you ask her?"

"She said the horses had run away, but it looks mighty much like a fib. I'd give a nickel to know."

Meanwhile the girl had proceeded until she reached the portals of a magnificent palace. Let us anticipate her entrance and acquaint ourselves with the building and its inmates.

We are not over fond of describing gorgeous edifices or grand festivities whose purpose is the catering of the animal appetite. Such descriptions are tantalizing to poor devils such as we are. They are too much like the epicurian banquet derived from the reading of the cook book, to suit our taste. Besides, they tend towards exciting the envy of the reader, a misdemeanor of which we would not be guilty for the most tempting consideration, our sole and only aim being to elevate his character and improve his morals. So we merely say: This mansion was a truly grand affair, furnished in the most luxurious manner, and filled with everything desirable; including happiness? you inquire. Nay, reader, that is about the only thing wealth does not insure or presuppose, and we leave it to your own self to draw your conclusions as to that a little further on.

We enter the private apartment of the owner and master of all this wealth, and find him seated in any easy chair. His countenance, however, betrays anything but ease. On the contrary, it betokens anger and indignation, scowling fiercely upon another person, the only inmate of the room beside the owner. Now he speaks:

"You have my ultimatum, sir. I shall no longer cater to your idle and vicious tastes, and if you do not at once accept and faithfully discharge the trust offered you without so much urbanity, and accompanied with such enticing emoluments, I shall withdraw my support and leave you to your fate."

The party addressed was a man young in years, but old in dissipation, which had emaciated his form, and marked his

features. He did not appear deeply impressed with the threat he had listened to, but said with a yawn: "You are joking, Senator. It would sound well in Gold street or the capitol, that Senator Cheatham cut off his son with a shilling."

"I do not care how it sounds, or how it looks. A shilling you say? Is that the sum a generous law compels one to leave a prodigal son? Here is yours," (flinging a small coin to the other's feet;) "now be gone, and don't confront me again until you bring with you the promise and determination to do my bidding."

"But, Senator—"

"Don't senator me, sir. You have my last word, and will oblige me by a speedy retirement from these quarters."

The other yawned again, then stretched himself, arose and withdrew, whistling the "Rogue's March."

"An appropriate air," the older man murmured, half bitterly, probably thinking of his worthy offspring in connection with the melody, without a faint suspicion of the possibility of a different construction.

"I trust this will bring him to his senses. I am tired of paying his bills, and smoothing over his peccadillos which threaten to assume an ugly character if allowed to grow. Well, what is it now? A fellow cannot work a minute without being interrupted."

The last words were provoked by a noise at the door, and the entrance of a lady, who requires, nay deserves a close description.

She appeared slightly over forty, but time, instead of wrinkling her features, seemed to have frozen them. No other word could express half so well the cast of her countenance. Her features seemed frozen, preserving the intactness characteristic to frozen matter, but also their icy chill. She had been very beautiful—she was beautiful even then, but it was the beauty of marble, marble chiseled in the frigid zone. She had beautiful golden hair, and eyes of violet blue, but eyes partaking of the general iciness of the apparition. Her

face was pale, not of the silky hue, common with consumptives, but pale like ivory or alabaster.

She glided nearer, until she was within half a dozen steps of the other; then she said in a voice strangely contrasting with the terrible import of her words:

"Blanche has been killed, John."

A curse from the other's lips stopped her.

"Woman, are you crazy to talk that way? What does John say? Where is he?"

He walked to the door, jerked it open and cried: "John! John!"

"Yes, sir," a voice responded, and a moment later its owner stood within the room. His master at once saw that something unusual, something terrible must have happened, for his hair hung disheveled around his face, his hands and face were soiled, and his clothes in disorder.

"What is this I hear?" the senator gasped, now thoroughly alarmed. "Where is Blanche? What has befallen her?"

"I fear they have killed her surr," the fellow cried, his lips shaking and his teeth clattering.

"Killed her, you dolt? You are drunk. Killed her? And you dare to show your face here and tell me?"

"And it wasn't I as could help it, your honor. You see it was thus:"

And then he proceeded to give a disconnected account of the affairs, alleging that the woman had whipped his horses causing them to run away, and refusing to obey the reins, until it was too late. We know that he embelished the real state of affairs and need not point out the reason. When he had done, the senator uttered a deep groan, saying: "And here we stand, instead of going to the rescue. Quick! Alarm the servants! Arm every one of them and send them to the scene of outrage."

"They have been sent, now," said the lady with the same frozen quietude, "You are the only man in the house except this coward. Why don't you go?"

There was an indescribable tone of utter contempt in her voice, which irritated the senator. He was on the point of making a furious reply, when a servant girl rushed into the room with a mixture of weeping and laughing. "She is here, Miss Blanche is here. She is all right, ma'am, all right."

Then a reaction came over the lady, if a frozen statue is capable of such a thing. She laid her haud upon her bosom; a slight flush came into her face, and, with a half whispered, "Thank Heaven," she glided from the room. "Where is Blanche?" she inquired of the girl who followed her. When she learned that Miss Cheatham had retired to her room, she went up a flight of stairs, and finally knocked at a door of the second story. Upon a "come in!" she opened the door and saw her daughter lying on a lounge, evidently unstrung by some recent terrible ordeal, but otherwise unharmed. The girl rose at the sight, and when her mother had glided up to her, sank into her embrace. For fully a minute the two stood thus entwined, the pale lady betraying an emotion doubly startling by the contrast of her general demeanor. There was one spot evidently, which had not been frozen—her mother's heart. When finally they released each other, they sat down side by side, their hands still clasped in a firm grasp. Then the mother said: "Tell me all about it. Was your life really in danger, my dear?"

"I think it was, mamma. I think I would have been torn to pieces, but for the assistance of a young man who defended me against a crowd of infuriated women, and brought me out in safety."

She then told the whole affair, avoiding purposely the superlatives so liberally applied by young ladies generally, but using nevertheless, a pathos, bringing the occurrence vividly before her mother's eye. She said not a word in praise of her rescuers, but when she spoke of him, her tone assumed a fervor betraying clearly to the other the intensity of her feelings on that point.

"And his name?" she inquired, when the girl had done. "He must be liberally rewarded."

Blanche made a gesture of impatience. "He is not of that sort," she said warmly. "As to his name, I asked him for it, but failed to catch it, on account of the noise of the starting car. No, mamma, we shall never see him again, and I long so to thank him."

Her looks were so absent as to attract her mother's attention. "Blanche," she said, as if wishing to divert her daughter's thoughts from that subject, "do you know that you were very imprudent to expose yourself in this manner?"

"I know now, mamma. I had no idea how terrible the passions of human beings can be aroused. It is want and poverty which make them so intense."

"Hardly, my daughter. Believe me, passions are as furious amongst the wealthy as among the poor."

"I suppose so, mamma, but I think, yes I feel convinced, that it is the extremes which make them so. You know I have always thought it wrong to possess so many millions. Now, I *know* it to be wrong and sinful in the extreme."

"I cannot contradict you, child, for there is perhaps no human being in this wide land that knows the hollowness of wealth better than I. But you must be tired. I will leave you to get that repose you need so badly to restore your strength. Good night, my darling."

On the following morning Miss Cheatham was more than usually pensive. She spent most of her time in her room, visited occasionally by her mother, who would say a kind word, and then disappear, moving about with a placidity of a statue, or the noiselessness of a spirit. About ten o'clock Mr. Cheatham entered his daughter's room. He closed the door carefully, then walked up to her and said, standing up and confronting her: "Blanche, what escapades are these? What business had you in the Irish quarter at such an unseasonable hour? Are you not aware that people will talk of you, and that such talk reflects on your parents?"

"I am sorry, father. I had no idea that there was any danger connected with the drive, or I would not have gone."

"Well, I trust you will abstain from such romantic trips

hereafter. Some new-fangled notions have upset your judgment, and caused you to imagine that such friendly visits to the poor and down-trodden will improve their condition. I know the world and can assure you that they do not, but that they cause provoking articles for the newspapers."

A blush rose in the girl's cheeks. "Was my name mentioned?" she inquired, eagerly.

"Not your name, but some circumstance bringing the thing pretty well home to us. I came in to warn you kindly, and to ask you at the same time: What answer am I to give to Count Suwarow? It is over a month now since he honored you by asking your hand in marriage, and you continue to hold him off—I—"

The girl rose from her seat, standing before him with that calm dignity so peculiar to her.

"I do not hold him off," she said coldly, "on the contrary, I told him kindly, but positively, from the start, that I do not love him, and therefore can not and will not marry him."

The Senator winced under her words and evidently was inclined to be angry.

"That's all nonsense and school girl's romance. Life is real, life is earnest, and a girl of your intelligence cannot help seeing that such romance has little to do with it, and that wealth, power and position are agencies too potent to be jested with. Count Suwarow is the plenipotentiary of Russia to our country. He is one of the most powerful men of his native land, and so rich that he is actually incapable of forming an estimate of his wealth. You were lucky enough to attract the attention and win the affection of such a man, and now you come and tell me that you do not love him. What does it matter? In marrying him you secure a position in which you can follow the bent of your inclination in every particular. Love him. Are you not aware that nine people out of ten marry without love?"

"I am assured by persons who ought to know that such is the case."

"And they informed you right. Come, will you author-

ize me to bring the Count the news of your acceptance?"

"Not to-day, father."

"Blanche, do not provoke me," he cried, angrily. "I have spoiled you by humoring every whim of yours, but beware! There is a limit to everything, my patience included. I want an answer, miss."

She stood pensively, evidently weighing what she should say to him. At length she gazed at him steadily and said: "Give me this day, father. I promise you solemnly to give you a plain and unvarnished answer to morrow morning."

"Very well," he replied, after a moment's thought. "Be a prudent girl, Blanche, and do not throw away chances, at which hundreds of girls would jump with alacrity."

"I'll tell you to-morrow, father."

"Very well. Good bye, Blanche, I'll have to go down town on business."

When he had left, Blanche remained fully five minutes in the same position; but her thoughts were rather dreamy in character, rocking before her vision a certain image surrounded with direful caricature as an offset. At length she started and, heaving a sigh, left her room for that of her mother. She found that lady seated in an arm chair, glancing over the leaves of a new novel. On seeing her child enter, her face brightened a little and pointing to her side, she said invitingly: "Come daughter, sit here, and talk to me. I have the blues, and your chat may perchance drive them away."

The girl shook her head pensively. Drawing a low stool to her mother's feet, she sat down on it, and said rather solemnly: "Mother, I come to you for advice. In truth, I lay my destiny in your hands, and as you decide, so will I act. You are my judge, you see, and a judge is always placed above the culprit. So I'll sit on this stool to await your decision."

"You are no culprit dear. When could my darling have committed a crime deserving that name?"

"Well, client, then."

"And you are serious, child?"

"Very serious, mother, as you will soon perceive."

"But you charge me with a terrible responsibility, Blanche."

"You love me, mother—that suffices. I know your decision will be guided by this love, and love you know, cannot err. Now listen: Father was in my room just now urging me to say 'Yes' to Count Suwarow's wooing. First I will argue the case as it appears to me, and then you shall decide. The laws of men and the precepts of religion tell us that it is our duty to obey our parents. Father has always been kind to me, and I should like very much to repay him by a ready obedience to his wishes or commands. On the other hand, I do not love the Count—yea, the manifestation of his urgent prayers has filled me towards him with something akin to repugnance. Now, mother, you know the whole case, and my sentiments concerning it. Decide my fate, for, as I said, I shall consider your decision as final and binding."

It would have been interesting to trace the thoughts and sentiments passing through this woman during these words. They were exceedingly tumultous, as we shall see before long. Outwardly, however, she appeared unmoved, making it appear as if her features were a frozen sea, incapable of indicating the condition of the billows below. She sat there fully five minutes wrapt in deep and painful meditation. She seemed to fight an inward struggle at the same time, for she heaved a deep sigh, and said to her child, every syllable tinctured with the essence of unspeakable love. "I have decided, Blanche, but not in spoken words will I communicate my verdict to you. Wait here one minute."

She arose and went into her bed chamber, whence she returned a few minutes later bearing in her hands some sheets of paper. Handing them to Blanche, she resumed: "Take these to your room and read them. As I said before, they will speak for themselves. Return them when you have done, and let no other mortal eye catch a glimpse of them. They contain bitter medicine my darling, and will convince

you that whatever feeling I am entertaining towards others, I love you, my darling, with every fibre of my soul."

She nodded gently, and pushed the girl coaxingly, as if she would urge her to begin the perusal without delay. So Blanche kissed her tenderly, and then went to her room, whose door she locked. Then she shoved an easy chair into a favorable light and read as follows:

Jan. 10th, 18—

It is very chilly, but it is not the low temperature which has frozen my blood. There has been a fearful tempest in the house, which has up-rooted all the flowers of my heart and blasted the prospects of happiness for this life. I wonder that I can say this; I wonder still more that I can narrate this tempest, and dissect with cruel indifference the tissues of a bleeding heart. I suppose it is the necessity of having a willing ear into which I can pour my grief, which induces me to take the pen and chronicle the events of this dreadful morning which broke so cheerfully, and smote us all so cruelly We had a late breakfast, and when it was over, papa, who generally leaves for his bank at once, tarried, following me from room to room, as if desirous of speaking to me. At last I turned laughingly upon him, saying: "Well, Pa, what is it? Can I do anything for you?"

He started, and turned pale. "Yes child" he said huskily; "You can do something for me, and if you will come into my room I will tell you what it is."

Little did I dream of the nature of the terrible revelations in store for me. Indeed they smote me doubly on account of their unexpectedness.

When we had seated ourselves in his study, he began:

"Eva you know Josephus Cheatham?"

"The clerk in your bank?" I asked wonderingly.

"The very one; what do you think of him?"

"Nothing," I replied with a laugh. "What should I think of him? I have never thought it necessary to trouble my thoughts concerning him."

"Well, my dear child, you will have to do that hereafter, for Mr. Cheatham has asked your hand in marriage."

I rose quickly to my feet, and looked at him wonderingly thinking I did not hear aright. "What did you say?"

He repeated his words, whereupon I started, saying:

"Father, you are making sport of me. What have I done to deserve such treatment? If Mr. Cheatham has had the impudence you mentioned, was it not enough to simply show him his place?"

I noticed that father was greatly troubled. The perspiration ran from his forehead, and he continued with a great effort at composure: "Daughter, listen to me. There are reasons which make it paramount for you and me to treat his proposition leniently, nay to accept it. Now listen to me," he continued, when he saw that I was on the point of uttering a vehement protest; "Cheatham has discovered papers, which put it in his power to reduce us to beggary."

"Let him do it then," I cried cheerfully. "Better poor than his wife."

"You talk like an idiot," he exclaimed, angrily. "Do you know what poverty, especially genteel poverty means? Of course you do not or you would not talk that way. But this is not all, Eva. You remember your uncle's unfortunate death?"

"Yes, he was asphyxiated."

"But you do not know that I was in your uncle's room as late as ten o'clock that night, and that Cheatham saw me coming out of it. Eva, I swear to you by all that is sacred, that—"

"Stop father," I cried, once more rising to my feet. "Has it come to this? Is it necessary for you to swear to convince your daughter you are not a murderer?"

He recoiled under these words.

"I thank you, Eva, for this confidence. No, thank heaven, I am not a murderer; but the world knows that my brother's death has made me a millionaire, and if Cheatham

whispers his knowledge to a few, I shall soon stand branded as a murderer."

"You are innocent," I cried encouragingly. "So brave them all and live their suspicion down."

He shook his head mournfully and said: "You do not know them. I could stand an open trial, but I could not bear to have them point with their fingers at me and whisper: 'There is the murderer. By rights he ought to grace the gallows.' Eva, it would kill me."

I feared it would. I had the choice between being my father's involuntary destroyer or to marry Cheatham. It was a short, but fearful struggle. Ten minutes later I said to him: "Father tell Mr. Cheatham that I accept his proposal."

He thanked me and went.

February 1st. The wedding day has been set. The day after the dreadful one described, Mr. Cheatham did me the honor to wait upon me in person. I had determined to marry him, but I had also resolved not to deceive him. I said to him: "Mr. Cheatham, I want to place our future relations upon a clear basis. I do not wish to deceive you. I do not love you, and shall never love you. After these intrigues of yours against my father I cannot even respect you, but I shall be a faithful wife to you as far as your honor is concerned. I can and will not play the hypocrite. If these terms and words do not suit you, release me, and I shall praise and thank you." But he did not release me, and to-morrow I shall be wedded to a man whom I loathe and abhore. Would it—I have asked myself repeatedly—Would it be justifiable to end my miserable existence, and a still voice within me, answers: It would be pardonable, at least. But what good would it do? It is true it would release me of fetters both hateful and repulsive, but it would leave him exposed to the poisonous fang, for whom I endure this martyrdom. No! no! There is no escape from this yoke. I must bear it, and I *will* endure it with the spirit of those martyrs who braved the malice of their persecutors and found comfort in the consciousness of the fulfillment of their duty.

Here the sheets of the diary ended, but pinned to them was this paper, superscribed in pencil: "Accommentary to Josephus Cheatham's character. Then came copy of Harry Halleck's affidavit, and next this affidavit.

To whom it may concern:

I, Harry Halleck, being in my sound mind, do herewith, and hereby declare, that Mrs. Mary Brown, with whom I have lived for many years in matrimony is truly my lawful wife, to whom I was wedded on the 25 day of July, 18—,in the Missionary church of Yoko by Rev. Swift, then minister of said church. Mary Brown was born in this wedlock, and is therefore truly and lawfully my daughter. I make this statement because I married Mary under the name of Harry Brown, assumed for reasons foreign to this matter, and because, being separated temporarily, being mortal, though in good health, my wife and child might be deprived of the fortune rightfully theirs. To which I have set my name and seal on this 20 day of June, 18.— HARRY HALLECK.

Witnesses:

JOHN KRUGER,
EDWARD MEANS.

PLUTOPOLIS, June 21st, 18—.

To-day Harry Hallack, of the firm of Halleck Bros., appeared before me a Justice of the Peace, and made oath that the contents of the above paper are the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth.

JASPER WELLS, Notary Public.

Then in pencil again:—This is the Document for whose oppression I was sold soul and body to Josephus Cheatham.

The hand of the poor girl sank as if under a heavy weight. The paper contained the death warrant of the love and respect she had thus far entertained for a father, of whose real character she had perhaps had an intuitive though dim perception, but who had shown to her as much affection and indulgence as was at all compatible with his nature. Now it fell like scales from her eyes, and she saw clearly what before had been distant and uncertain. And to this man her poor

mother had been tied many years. She saw now more clearly, traits in her mother's character which she had failed to comprehend before, and which now threw a perfect halo around her martyred head. She understood what it must have cost that mother to make this revelation, and that only the determination to save her child at all hazards from a fate worse than a dozen deaths, could at last have overcome her scruples. The medicine *was* bitter as gall and wormwood, but it effected the desired cure. A bright light came into the girl's eyes. She compressed her lips firmly and then made the mental vow, that *never* and under *no circumstances* would she marry a man she did not love. Taking the papers, entrusted to her keeping and discretion, to her mother and handing them to her, she said, only: "I understand, mother dear;" and then left the room.

The girl grew much older that day. The mental tempest which swept over her soul broke many a tender shoot, killed many a flower blooming in romantic dells and shady recesses. She sought the solitude of her room most of the time, absenting herself from several meals, exciting the curiosity, though not alarm of her father. He had always known her to be peculiar, given to pensive moods and reflections, which sometimes broke out in startling questions, and generally resulted in convictions even more startling. These, however, she had kept to herself, and as her father had always found her docile and obedient, he feared no serious trouble in this instance. The fact was, Senator Cheatham hardly understood his daughter. She was too deep for him, and as he saw merely the placid surface of her gentle disposition, he had no conception of the depth below. When he, therefore, entered her room the next morning he wore a cheerful aspect. Expecting a ready compliance with his wishes or rather dictates, he did not deem it worth while to sit down, but said standing: "Well, my dear girl, have you decided to be an obedient daughter, and to send to Count Suwarow the message to come and hear the fulfillment of his wishes from your own lips." She had been sitting, but now arose, and said, looking him

full in the face: "Father, I am sorry to disappoint both you and him. After weighing the matter long and carefully, I have arrived at the conclusion that I can not accept the Count's wooing, in justice to him and myself. The face of the Senator reddened, and a vein which crossed his forehead filled and stood forth in purple color. Both the unexpectedness of this answer and the calmness of the girl provoked a wrath, which threatened to escape his control, but he restrained his anger with a mighty effort, saying, huskily: "Blanche, you are joking. Permit me to inform you that I am not at all in the humor to be funny."

"You are mistaken father," she replied, unmoved, facing him with a fearlessness under which he shrank. "I never in my life was more serious. I can and will not wed Count Suwarow."

A curse escaped his lips, and he raised his clentched first as if to strike. She did not retreat an inch, but, awaited the blow with an unconcern which brought him to his senses. He lowered the uplifted hand, but, as if to indemnify himself for this restraint, a torrent of abuse and threats broke from his lips.

"Ungrateful hussy," he cried in a voice of thunder. "This is the reward for all my affection and indulgence. But beware! There are means to bring refractory children to terms. I'll cut you off with a penny, and turn you into the street; that's what I'll do."

"I'll go father, if you wish it. Better the crust of poverty than the gilded cage and the loathsome presence of a man I do not love."

"Yes, I suppose that would suit you," he cried, nursing his wrath. "You always had a beggarly taste, and would enjoy their company. But I will not gratify you. I will call in medical assistance and have you declared insane, that's what I will do. We'll see what effect the tiger jacket will have upon you and your lunatic notions. I swear I will."

He turned to rush from the room, but started back as if he had seen an apparition. Indeed, what he saw, might well

be called an apparition. A few steps from him stood Mrs. Cheatham. Her features wore their usual icy touch. Her cheeks were as palid as ever, even her eyes darted glances marked by their chill, but also by a supreme contempt. Raising her hand slowly in a warning manner, she said: "Swear not, Josephus Cheatham, for if you do and carry out your purpose, I will break the silence which I have preserved so many years. Injure one hair on the head of this child, and the world shall make the acquaintance of Senator Cheatham, and learn the manner in which he earned his millions."

Foam gathered on the lips of the man, but they remained closed. He stood for a moment as if meditating some desperate step. Then he gathered himself, and with a glance full of deadly hatred, he passed his wife and rushed from the room.

CHAPTER XVII.

PLOTS AND COUNTERPLOTS.

Richard Velder found his affairs well muddled. Mrs. Kean, though both able and willing, had been unable to attend to every little detail. Uncle Calculus had kept the books in excellent condition, but beyond that he was a mere cipher with no figures in front, to count. True, the tinker had occasionally attended to the most pressing business, but he had been very busy with the affairs of his wards, and discovered that one cannot well serve two masters. On examination Richard found that after a successful start, his colonies had become stationary, partly because the parties entrusted with their career had become indifferent or mercenary, abusing Richard's confidence to his and his ward's detriment. The question now arose. What should he do? He felt that his means did not suffice to colonize the whole globe, and what is more and was worse, that a truly paternal government is not exactly the thing to advance the welfare of the masses. The power of the Czar is sometimes a good thing, as a stroke of his pen can remedy an evil, which a liberal government

cannot reach or reach only slowly and indifferently. But, the pen, which is so strong an agent for good, can also be a terrible agent for evil, and, what is worse, the people subjected to his rule will forever remain in a state of infancy.

These thoughts occupied the mind of our friend long and painfully. He disliked the idea of giving up the role of an invisible Providence, a "Deus ex Machina;" but after several weeks of earnest study, he came to the conclusion that such a renunciation would be necessary, and that a concentration of his means and measures was indispensible for a successful execution of his plans. Then the question arose: Which of his characters was more essential to the public weal, that of Dick Brown or Dick Velder? He was not sufficiently conceited to imagine the world could not get along without either. He knew that his idea had taken deep root in the masses, and that the good work would probably go on without Brown or Velder, but while aware of his dispensibleness, he also knew that Velder's millions would form a powerful, nay, indispensible aid, and that, on the other hand, the tinker had gained that great popularity calculated to sway the masses in emergencies. That such emergencies would arise frequently and at an early date, he knew; so, after weighing the usefulness of the two characters, he concluded that it would be well to combine the merits of the two, by realizing all the means of Velder, and placing them at the disposal of the tinker. This resolution once formed, our friend was not slow to carry it out. On his arrival he found offers from numerous parties to purchase at greatly advanced prices his various proprieties. The swamp, now a village of a thousand cottages, with room for five thousand more, was in great demand, a syndicate wishing to purchase it, and offering a million dollars in cash. Richard felt sure that this bid would be increased a few hundred thousand if the party saw any prospect of closing a bargain. Other parties offered liberal prices for the other estates, and when the proper negotiations closed a few weeks later, Richard found himself fully two millions richer. Next he wrote to Senator Cheatham, informing him

that he wished to make investments on a larger scale, requiring vast sums, and that he would, therefore accept ten millions in cash for the fourteen payments of one million, still due. As the discount was very liberal, the Senator eagerly accepted the offer, paying our friend in bonds of Occidentia. Thus he held at his disposal eighteen millions, which might and probably would suffice to carry out plans growing rapidly in size, and assuming every day a more tangible shape. He had noticed a growing restlessness in the press of the country, subsidized by capital, and working, with few exceptions, in its interest. Various measures had been suggested, all aiming at a sharper surveillance of the masses, to keep them in subjection and preventing them from putting into practice the dangerous new gospel of the socialistic evangelists. He felt instinctively that mischief was brewing in the ranks of the upper tendom, and as he could watch and unearth their doings better as one of them, he formed the resolution of remaining Richard Velder sufficiently long to serve this purpose.

One morning he received a short letter from Harry, informing him that the young man would like to see him as soon as possible. So Richard started without delay for the Del Polino, where Harry approached him respectfully. Richard demanded the morning paper and when the young man handed it to him he whispered:

"Go to the reading room, I wish to speak to you in private." Richard rose accordingly, and, paper in hand walked to the reading room which he found empty, a circumstance which brought a smile to his lips. The "Jeunesse dorée" was not over fond of reading. He sat only a few minutes when Harry entered and said, after casting a cautious glance over the room: "Mr. Velder do you remember what you told me the other day?"

"I told you various things, Harry, I believe. Which one is it?"

"Oh, of your fear that these fellows are plotting against the people."

"I think I expressed that apprehension, Harry."

"Well, I heard something yesterday which makes me think that you hit the nail pretty well on the head. Just let me look into the hall to see whether the air is clear. A fellow can't be too cautious."

He opened the door, and failing to discover the trace of any human being, he returned and said guardedly, coming as near our friend as prudence would permit: "Well, sir, yesterday I was in the watercloset of this room, when a couple of men came in and sat down near enough for me to understand their words. Generally people don't discuss secrets here, so I did not feel any compunction to remain. In fact, I went on cleaning the premises, and wasn't particularly anxious either, to avoid noise, until I heard one of them say rather guardedly: 'Yes, General, it is too bad, and things can't go on this way much longer. This cursed plebs must be gagged and chained, to keep it from trampling upon us.'"

"I had not paid any particular attention to the speaker before, but now recognized without difficulty, the voice of Senator Cheatham."

"Aha!" Richard exclaimed. "Go on, Harry."

"The other chap was General Runwell. Says he: 'Well, Senator, I have thought so all along and warned you, if I am not very much mistaken.'"

"'I think you did, General; but these radicals watch a fellow so keenly that he must be careful not to expose any weak spots. If I am not mistaken, you counseled the introduction of a bill to increase the regular army.'"

"'That's what I did. You can't place any confidence in this militia, and must expect to see them fraternize with the mob, and turn against you, just when you need them the most.'"

"'Well, I have come to the conclusion to assume the odium and risk of such a bill, and shall introduce it after vacation. Now, I want your opinion and advice on some details, so where can I meet you under four eyes?'"

"The other studied a moment, then said: 'I think we can

meet in this building with less risk of discovery than anywhere else.'"

"'I think so too. Let me see. You know, there is a number of little apartments here arranged for tête-à-têtes of a more amorous character, but one of them will suit our purpose. When can you meet me, General?'"

"'To morrow evening, Senator, if that suits you.'"

"'Perfectly. I'll order a little spread to be laid in No. 10. Can you be there at nine sharp?'"

"'I can, Senator.'"

"'All right, General, au revoir, until then.'"

"That's all, Mr. Velder."

"It is a good deal and enough. Now, see here, Harry, I have a little machine, an invention of my own, which records the conversation of any parties near by. It is not more than eighteen inches long, or six inches high and wide. Could you smuggle it into the room and hide it there?"

"I could without any difficulty. I might hide it under the table, you know, which is covered with a cloth, or set it on one of the shelves without attracting attention, Mr Velder."

"All right, then. You understand Harry, that it would be contemptable for me to trouble myself with their affairs. But when it comes to plotting against our friends and brethren, the things assume a different aspect. Do you understand me?"

"Fully, Mr. Velder, and I share your views; but how will I get the machine to start at the proper time?"

"I'll set it to start at eight. These fellows are never before time but mostly behind. The machine, however, runs for two hours, and is therefore liable to catch all they say during their rendezvous."

"All right, Mr. Velder. When will you bring the machine? I ought to have it in good season. I think the table will be set this afternoon."

"I'll get you the machine at once. You meet me at the foot of the stairs, and if anybody asks you concerning the bundle, you must invent some plausible story."

"Wrap it thickly in paper sir, and I'll smuggle it in as washing."

Then they parted, and an hour later Harry was in possession of the phonograph, which he concealed until an opportunity of hiding it in No. 10 would offer. Nor was this difficult. Harry had little or nothing to do in the afternoon, and when he volunteered to help the waiter in arranging the room for the little banquet, his assistance was accepted with readiness and without suspicion. The damask table cloth hung nearly to the floor, and when Harry slipped the machine under, profiting by a momentary absence of his comrades, no one would have suspected the presence of a witness, who, without hearing himself, would record every syllable spoken in the room, thus bearing testimony against any one plotting against the safety of the land or its inhabitants.

On the next morning Harry brought to the Velder mansion a package with the request to inform Mr. Velder of his presence. Richard was out just then, so the youth delivered the parcel to the servant, with the injunction of handing it to her master immediately after his return. This was done. Richard locked himself into his room, reversed the bolt, and listened to the following dialogue, which we shall free from the clinking of the glasses, the orders to the waiters, and other outside matter foreign to the plot. When the reader learns the dialogue, he will not wonder that Richard listened with ever increasing interest.

"Well, General, here we are. The waiter will not disturb us without the ringing of the bell, so let us discuss the business of the meeting. Let me, however, remark as a preliminary, that there will be no necessity for putting on the masks one has to wear in public."

"We know each other, General, and may dispense with all this silly prattle of liberty, equal rights."

"Just so, Senator. It is the upper crust which rules and must continue to rule, if a decent fellow is to remain in Occidentia."

"Very well, I see we understand each other, and agree as

to the preliminaries. Let's pass to the main question, then. As I told you before, this question of increasing the regular army is quite a ticklish one, and must be handled with gloves to avoid burns and scratches. I propose to divide the risk between us, with the tacid understanding, that we divide the profits as well. You know as well as I, that our commander-in-chief is getting old in years and mind, and cannot hold out much longer. How would you like to be addressed: 'General Runwell, Commander-in-Chief of the Army of Occidentia,' especially when this army numbers a hundred thousand men?"

"It wouldn't sound bad, Senator."

"Of course, it wouldn't, and I know a certain senator that would do all in his power to bring it about. Let me see: How large is our army now, all told?"

"Hardly twenty-five thousand, a number rediculously small, in proportion to the size of Occidentia."

"Dangerously small, you better say, General. Well, it should be larger, it must be larger, and it *will* be larger, if we manage well."

"Out with your scheme, Senator, I am all ear."

"I am coming. There are two sources of danger to which our country is exposed, and against which we must guard, the Indians and foreign complications."

"You forget public outbreaks."

"General, I fear you would cut a poor figure in politics. You are only too right to think of this peril, but you should be too wary to express your thoughts. No, it is only the Indians and the other Powers we have to fear, and it is upon these strings we must play our war dance. Don't you think that the Indians have been rather troublesome of late?"

"The Indians? Why, no—I mean *yes*, of course. They have been very troublesome and annoying."

"In your department particularly?"

"In my department, Senator."

"Then, if I were you, I would present this danger in its true light, address, for instance, a circular to the Secretary of

War, warning him, and through him the country, of their peril."

"That might answer only—"

"I know what you would say: I'll manage the secretary. Next, sir, comes the danger arising from the rabbit-skin and the cat-fish trouble. I am really afraid that there is bloodshed lurking in this war cloud, General."

"There may be, Senator. I admire both your sagacity and the patriotism characterizing your remarks."

"Thank you, General. Well, if a bill were introduced in the Senate, advocating the increase of our standing army and the mover called upon the criticisms of experts such as you, for instance, could he depend upon a confirmation of his assertions?"

"Of course he could, upon a hearty and unqualified confirmation, Senator."

"That settles it, General, that settles it. Let me see; this is the 18th of February. Our sessions begin again on the first of March, and I must use the respite thus given us for the preparation of the bill."

"You think you can get congress to pass, and the President to sign it?"

"As to the latter, he is merely a tool of our party. As to Congress, I can rely upon the Senate, which is entirely composed of our set, and smells fire and brimstone far off. The Lower House is not quite so certain, but I think we can play successfully upon the fears of its conservative members. I assure you that we shall strain every nerve to accomplish a measure absolutely necessary for the preservation of our prerogatives. By the way, General, will you be present at the masked ball next Wednesday?"

"I think I shall. Will your ladies be there?"

"I think they will, though there is no reliance to be placed upon women, you know. They are fickle as April, and changeable like the chameleon. Well, we are through, I believe. Have you any more suggestions to make, General?"

"Yes, Senator. I have often thought it dangerous to

allow these independent companies of militia to form. It should require the permit of the governor to form such military bodies."

"That would be a feeble protection, but yet a protection. I'll keep this point in mind. Anything else?"

"Yes, in my estimation the law on conspiracies should be revised and sharpened. At present we cannot reach these rascally agitators stirring up the people. Take this tinker Brown, for instance. He is a standing menace to our caste, and goes on as unconcernedly as if he were cock of the yard."

"The fellow *is* dangerous and I must keep an eye on him. Well, General, these hints are valuable, and I shall benefit by them in due season. One thing at a time, you know. The increase of the army once secured, and the rest is comparatively easy. If you are done, I'll ring for the waiter."

Richard had heard with mingled feelings. When his own name was mentioned a smile passed over his face and he muttered: "Quite complimentary, gentlemen. I would a thousand times rather be feared and hated by you than loved. Let me see; the first of March. Well, Senator, your respite is my respite. Let us see who will make the best use of it."

Next Richard turned back the machine and made it repeat the dialogue so slowly that he could copy it on paper. When done he heaved a sigh of relief, locked the document in his secretary, and went down stairs into the parlor, where he found Maxwell, who had brought the tickets for the masked ball and conversed gaily with Elinor, who replied in the same style, showing more animation than usual, and paying back the visitor's jests in so happy a manner, as to create the astonishment of her friend. Richard had carried out his intention and told Maxwell that an unfortunate marriage had clouded his sister's mind; but evidently to no purpose, for Maxwell continued his visits and his marked attention to Elinor, who not only rebuffed him, but showed him a friendliness and appreciation surprising to her friends, and gratifying to Maxwell, who told

Richard more than once that he could discover no marks of mental abberation in Mrs. Roberts. Richard shrugged his shoulders, as if to say: "Very well, my dear fellow, have it your own way; but don't you come afterwards and complain to me." At about the same time he carried out his intentions of submitting his sister's case to the medical authorities, which he consulted on a former occasion. Before taking the physician to the house he told him of Maxwell's attentions, and their remarkable effect upon Elinor. The doctor's eyes brightened and he said with a smile: "That is very fortunate indeed." "Similia similibus curantur, you know," he said with a smile. "Don't you impede this little courtship, for it will probably restore your sister's mind."

"Then you would not counsel a meeting with the party that upset it?"

The doctor eyed him searchingly. "You can confide in me" he said warmly. "We fellows meet with so much misery and devilment, that we do not mind it, and treasure every evidence of it in the recesses of our soul. Has the rascal turned up?"

"He is within our reach, sir. I may as well tell you that he benefitted by the sudden death of both my parents and my absence, to inveigle my sister into a sham marriage, and leave her afterwards to her fate."

"The rascal! Does she talk of him as much as formerly?"

"Hardly at all, and when she does, it is with indifference and as of a person who is dead."

"Well, I won't decide until I have seen her. If a new affection has taken hold of her, a meeting with her betrayer might possibly retard the restoration of her mind."

The doctor was introduced as Richard's friend. He remained the entire evening, thus having an opportunity to study Elinor. It was Maxwell's evening, and when his name was announced by the servant, the doctor saw a fine red rise in her cheeks. His face cleared visibly, and when Richard led him to his carriage on his departure, he said: "She'll be

all right. I think it wouldn't hurt to bring her face to face with the Don Juan. I think, if she could be made real indignant or angry, it would have a good effect."

Richard reported the doctor's words to Mrs. Kean, who said: "Well, I would not precipitate matters. Let things have their course. If she really likes Mr. Maxwell, and it looks very much like it, such an affection will prove a very effective medicine, and not hard to take."

At last the evening of the great masked ball had arrived. The ladies had decided to benefit by Mr. Maxwell's kindness and to frequent the ball. Richard forseeing the possibility of unpleasant complications, and fearing reproach on the part of his friend, took him to his room and gave him an unvarnished account of his sister's past, saying as an introduction: "I cannot bear the thought of misleading you, or even tolerating false impressions to influence your feelings for my sister." When he had done, Maxwell sprang up, his eyes flashing fire, and an angry red mantling his cheeks. "The scoundrel!" he exclaimed. "Does he live? Do I know him? Tell me his name, that I may crush him like a scorpion."

"He lives, and you may learn his name, if you promise to leave him to me. The doctor thinks that a meeting with him may affect her favorably. It is evident that she no longer cares for him, a new deity having probably been enshrined in her heart."

"A new deity?" Maxwell cried with evident alarm. "Velder I trust you are mistaken."

"Even if the initials of the new diety should be 'L. M.'"

"Who is 'L. M.?"

"Say, did you sit for Twain's *Innocents Abroad.* 'L. M.' stands for Lucius Maxwell, if you must know."

"By Jove, you don't mean it? Richard, I would be the happiest fellow in the world, if you spoke the truth. I have half a notion to find out now. What do you say?"

"I say nothing. It is no use to advise people in love, they tell me."

"You are a tease, Richard. Well, I'll know my fate. So here we go."

He went into the parlor as if there were a battery to storm. Unfortunately he shut the door behind him so that we cannot follow him. Nor do they speak loud enough for us to hear them through the door. The only thing which we can judge by, is his face, as he leaves the house, and that is so joyous and happy that Elinor can surely not have been very cruel to him. That evening Mrs. Kean said to Richard in a whisper: "It is all right between them, and Elinor is not only her former self, but much more clever than I ever knew her."

But to return to the evening of the masked ball. After supper Professor Andersen and Bertha made their appearance at the Velder mansion to join the family in their projected visit to the carnival. Bertha had shrunk at first from the thought of going to the scene of such dreadful experience, but when both Richard and her uncle assured her of the utter groundlessness of fear, she had finally consented, and taken an almost childish delight in the suit which Elinor and her aunt had chosen for her. It was the costume of a Swedish country girl, highly appropriate on account of her long luxuriant braids of yellow hair. Richard and Maxwell had planned a merited punishment of Cheatham, Jr., for this outrage, but said nothing to Bertha, partly to keep her from worrying, and partly because their measures were by no means perfected, and would much depend upon circumstances. Elinor and Mrs. Kean had selected the garb of Sisters of Mercy, while Maxwell had chosen that of an ancient knight errant.

Richard had chosen two suits, that of a mail carrier, and that of a grinder, the latter probably with the view of braving his foes in his true character in their own den.

The company started early, and they intended to dress in the club building, and desired, therefore, to arrive in season. The building was brilliantly lit with thousands of gas jets, and as they ascended the broad stairway, it appeared to Bertha's inexperienced eyes, as if they entered upon a scene of the

Arabian Nights. She clung tightly to her uncle's arm, who was hardly less bewildered than the girl, and in turn, took good care to adhere closely to the heels of Richard and Maxwell. From the second floor they took the elevator which carried them to the next one containing the ball room and its accessories. There were dressing rooms for both sexes, besides small apartments for tête-à-têtes, lining the hall on two sides. There were also bar-rooms, and places for refreshments of every description, in short everything belonging to such an establishment. Here they parted, the ladies seeking the seclusion of a dressing room, the gentlemen to look for Harry who had received a hint to be on hand. Nor did he disappoint them, for hardly had they left the ladies, when he stepped from one of the dressing rooms greeting them with a friendly "hallo."

They stepped to this apartment which was empty, locked the door, and began to dress.

"Well, Harry," Richard inquired, "have the Cheatham's come?"

"Not yet, Mr. Velder. I told the boys to keep their eyes open and report."

"You used due caution, though?"

"Don't fear, Mr. Velder, they won't smell a rat."

"And you think you can find out what masks they will wear?"

"I'll try mighty hard, anyhow. May be I can get to assist in dressing them. If not, my chums will post me. But if you gentlemen don't need my services, I may as well scedaddle, for 'tis the early bird you know that catches the worm."

"You'll be on hand, though, when I change my costume?"

"You bet. You better lock the door on going out. I have a duplicate key, and shall be on the lookout. I'll report as soon as I have found out the masks they wear." He left and our friends proceeded to disguise themselves. Andersen donned the long flowing robe of an astrologer, this simple at-

tire suiting both his taste and age. Half an hour later Harry returned and reported that he had been successful in his mission. General Runwell, he said, would personify an Indian chief. He wore a leather suit of tan color and three eagle feathers in his scalp-lock. The Senator had chosen the garb of a Chinese mandarin, and his son that of a Turk. The Senator's habit consisted of yellow silk, while Cyrus was dressed in red trowsers and a blue silken jacket.

"Do you think you will know them from that?" he added.

"I should think so," Richard replied with a laugh. "If they do not change their costumes, we have them sure. Are you ready, gentlemen?"

They nodded, and the trio left the room, locking it securely to prevent the entrance of curious idlers. One of the female attendants was dispatched to notify the ladies of their presence, and a few minutes later the company was re-united. Maxwell offered his arm to Elinor; Anderson conducted Bertha, while Richard escorted his aunt. When the door of the ball room was flung open, an involuntary "Aha!" escaped the lips of the three ladies, and they arrested their steps to gaze upon a scene enchanting and brilliant in the extreme. The hall was nearly a hundred feet long, by sixty wide. Two rows of slender columns bore the ceiling, which was at least thirty feet above the floor, and painted in the most exquisite manner. A thousand gas jets illuminated the hall, reflected by countless mirrors which reached from the floor to the ceiling. The floor was waxed and caused the feet of the uninitiated to slip in a risky manner. The band seated on a gallery at the narrow end, played bewitching music, causing the feet of the young and gay to beat the time with impatient expectation. The most attractive scene, however, was doubtless the multitude swaying hither and thither, to and fro, resembling a sea of silk and satin, broadcloth and brocade, silver and gold, pearls and diamonds.

"I had no idea that there is so much splendor in the world, uncle," Bertha said with a beating heart, a sentiment

to which the professor was ready to subscribe. "See, they are going to commence dancing. Let us retire to the side. Mrs. Kean, don't forsake us."

"Never fear, my dear, just keep at my side. Why, here is a noble Indian chief, evidently bent upon scalping you."

"Maiden from the North," the red man said with a gallantry rare in his clan. "May the last of the Tobogans ask you to step with him the light fantastic measure?"

"May I?" Bertha asked, looking inquiringly into Mrs. Kean's face.

"I think you may. You see he has left his scalping knife at home."

So the girl rose, dropped a courtesy and was led to the place where the couples formed for the opening march. Maxwell came next, soliciting and receiving Elinor's hand.

"This example is contagious," said Mrs. Kean, laughingly, to the Professor, who had taken refuge at her side "Don't this fine music send the blood coursing through your veins, letting you forget your years."

"It is very fine, but it could not induce me to venture amongst that crowd. I am sure I would kill a dozen in my awkwardness."

"That settles it," she said, merrily, "I was on the point of inviting you."

The dance began, and the sight which these fantasticly dressed people presented was both fine and unique. When it was over the couples swarmed like so many bees, acting and talking in accordance with their characters. The Indian conducted the Swedish maiden back to her seat, expressing the hope that she would favor him with another dance during the evening. As he retreated a mail carrier hustled through the crowd, handing him a letter and then disappeared in the multitude. The Indian looked at the missive, opened it carelessly, and was on the point of putting it indifferently into his pocket, when he suddenly started, reading not only attentively, but excitedly, as follows:

PATROPOLIS, Febuary 21st, 18—

Dear Run:—Your uncle Sam got your note, but being sick with the rheumatics, begs me to tell you that you can't have the boxes with toy soldiers for which you ask. He really can't afford the outlay now; so you'll have to play a while longer with the old ones. As to the venture in red skins, rabbits and catfish, uncle thinks it is poor stock, and advises you not to meddle with it. Affectionately,

AUNT BETSY.

The chief mused. These simple lines seemed to have an almost magical effect upon him, for he sank into a revery so deep as actually to overlook and therefore miss the next dance. Meanwhile the carrier had industriously plied his vocation and handed his letters right and left. The recipients, however, did not all seem so deeply affected as the Indian, for while some laughed, others called the carrier cheeky, and threatened to hand in a complaint to the Postmaster General. Finally the dispenser of missives espied a costly clad Mandarin, who walked leisurely and with much dignity among the crowd. "Letter, sir," cried the carrier, diving in his usual fashion into the crowd and disappearing before the Chinaman had opened his letter. Let's look over his shoulder to see whether we can discover Chinese characters. No, the letters are English, so let us see what the contents are. Hurry, for the Mandarin seems strangely excited, and may crumble up the letter, unless we hasten. He reads it a second time, with increasing interest, if not excitement. Let us join him.

PATROPOLIS, Feb. 21st, 18—.

Dear Joe:—I am sorry to inform you that my old man is sick. His stomach is out of sorts, he says, and he blames Congress for the trouble. He says some of its bills lie very heavy on his stomach, and defy all attempts at digestion. Having heard it whishered that you intend offering a soldier bill after vacation, he begs you earnestly to spare him, as such a bill might make his malady fatal. He says, he has more soldiers now than he can feed and pay, so please don't bother him. The doctor has forbidden Sam to go out,

and as time is very heavy on him, he begs you to send him that dialogue between the Senator and the General, delivered in No. 10 to cut it out and paste it into his scrap book. Trusting that you will humor him in these requests, I am, dear Joe.

Yours very truly, AUNT BETSY.

The Mandarin felt the perspiration rolling down his brow. "Confoundedly hot here" he muttered turning in the direction of the bar room. "How in the devil's name this thing could have leaked out is more than I can comprehend. Runwell can hardly have been crazy enough to give it away. I must see him about it, though."

By this time our carrier's supply had become nearly exhausted. He held only one more letter; but with it he seemed rather chary, for he looked this way, and that way, without being able to make up his mind. At last, however, he seemed to have formed a resolution. He worked his way to an elegantly attired Turk in a blue jacket and red pantaloons, uttering his stereotyped "letter, sir," and then disappearing not merely from his neighborhood but from the ball room. After seeing that he was unobserved, he opened the little dressing room, where we have seen him at the opening of the ball, and rapidly unrobed, to don with the same rapidity a suit such as Italian or Hungarian scissor grinders are won't to wear; although his suit was of superior material and rather a fashionable cut. Next he picked up his apparatus, and was on the point of turning to the ball room, when Harry made his appearance. While they conversed together, let us go and watch the Turk and the letter he has received. It is very short it seems, for on looking over his shoulder, we noticed only a line or two. Yet the contents must be very startling, for the hands of the Turk shake violently, and it is with a powerful effort, that he succeeded in holding the paper sufficiently still to read a second time, as follows:

PLUTOPOLIS, Feb. 22, 18—.

Arthur dear:—Rejoice! I have found you at last, and am dying to meet you, which will be at twelve, when they un-

mask. Bertha is also here; so are your particular friends, Nemesis and Retribution.

Yours impatiently,

ELINOR.

To the Turk, too, the air seemed intolerably hot. He left the room, then the hall, and next evening the papers contained amongst their personals, this notice: "We learn that Mr. Cyrus Cheatham, son of Senator Cheatham, has started on an European trip to restore his health, which has been frail and unsatisfactory for some time." Somehow the disappearance of the Turk did not seem to dampen the spirits of the crowd, which went on dancing, chatting, teasing and flirting, as before. It did not disturb the equinamity of the younger Sister of Mercy who, contrary to her vow of abstinence, danced almost every dance, having invariably for her partner a big knight errant, who had fastened her glove to the crest of his helmet and served her as faithfully as any paladin of ancient times. When the pair did not dance, they promenaded or partook of the refreshments so temptingly displayed in adjacent apartments. While thus engaged, they said all the pretty and sweet things discoursed on such occasions, things very delightful for the parties concerned, but rather stale for outsiders. We shall, therefore, not render them here, and only chronicle a short conversation bearing directly upon our story.

"So you are happy and content?" the knight inquired, while handing an ice cream to the Sister.

"Happy, Lucius? Yes, I am happier than I have been for years. I feel like newly born, like one awakening from a long and distressing dream. In fact, the past is like a blank to me, and I do not recollect a thing after my parents' death, and—and my marriage. I sometimes think I must have been ill, very ill, for—"

"I would not borrow trouble, dear," he said soothingly, fearing that too deep a search might bring trouble and recollections both dangerous and unpleasant. "Richard tells me that he has learned definitely, that your husband is dead. So

there is nothing in the way to our happiness, and if you will only set the day—mind, an early day—for our wedding, you will bind in adamant chains the truest knight that ever lived."

The answer was a gracious one, so what need of details? These knights are generally jealous, and dare devils in the bargain, so we had better get out of the way of this one, and mingle again with the crowd, where, amongst other masks, a scissor grinder is plying his trade. Just as we join him, he accosts an Indian chief, saying: "Want your scalping iron ground, Geronimo? Good thing to prepare in times of peace for war, you know. There is war in the air, they say. Injuns on the warpath, you know, and the British lion shaking his shaggy mane."

The warrior started. "What do you mean, fellow?" he asked somewhat haughtily.

"Mean? There's nothing mean about me, Geronimo. We tinkers are plain folks; no meanness about us. We grind scissors but no souls."

Again the warrior started, and seemed inclined to take the grinder to task. The latter, however, had had his say, and, taking up his frame, sought new employment and new adventures. Running against a pompous Mandarin, he exclaimed: "Ah, son of the celestial realm, any work for me? Hard times, these, Mr. Chinaman; nothing to tinker but the constitution, and nothing to mend but the manners of our nabobs. Can't you give a fellow a job?"

The Mandarin eyed him keenly, then said gruffly: "You mimic the rascals well, sir."

"The nabobs, Mandarin? You better be careful sir to call them names. They are surly, *they* are, just now, and might haul you over the coals."

"I mean the fellows you mimic. They need a lesson, good fellow, and I shouldn't wonder if it would be given before long."

"You call me good, Sir Mandarin. Thanks for the compliment. I know many a grinder that would hesitate to re-

turn the compliment. They are ungrateful, *they* are, in spite of all the blessings the nabobs bestow upon them."

The Mandarin laughed angrily. "You mock them well, sir. One would almost imagine, to hear one of the saucy imps in person. Hallo, Esquimo, a word!"

The tinker pursued his way, addressing the masks everywhere and actually grinding a few knives, to the delight of the crowd. Suddenly somebody touched his elbow, and when he turned, he noticed a Carmelite nun standing by his side.

"Tinker" she said, her voice trembling with suppressed emotion, "may I claim your services in private for a minute or two?"

He gazed at her keenly, expecting to discover some acquaintance, but failed to notice any peculiarities which could lead to a recognition.

"I am at your service," he said with a bow, rather at variance with the profession.

"Then follow me," the nun replied, turning and leaving the ball room, to enter one of the adjoining apartments.

There was nobody in it and the noise of the crowded hall broke into it only like the breakers of the turbulent sea into a sheltered bay. Leaving the door open the nun turned suddenly and said, with the same marks of inward excitement: "Do you not recognize my voice, sir?"

Once more he gazed keenly, then shook his head, saying wonderingly: "I do not."

A sigh escaped her lips. "No wonder," she said, almost sadly. "*You* merely did me a service, probably a daily occurrence with one so brave. I owe you my life. Do you still fail to recognize my identity?"

He did recognize her. This was the brave girl he had rescued from the hands of the mob on the memorable night of the riot; but was he at liberty to acknowledge the fact? Would he not jeopardize his incognito, by entrusting his secret to this woman, a member of the caste, against which his efforts were directed? No, prudence counseled discretion at the expense of generosity, so he kept on shaking his head,

saying evasively, "You probably mistake me for some one else, madam."

She shook her head almost fiercely, crying: "Take you for some one else? How could I? The man of whom I speak rescued me from the hands of an infuriated mob, and you think I could mistake his voice? I would recognize it from a thousand, for it is engraven here, (laying her hand upon her bosom,) and I would recognize it a hundred years hence as readily as to-night."

A queer feeling seized him. He felt strangely moved by this intensity of gratitude, this—this—well this ardent confession of harboring in her virgin heart the tone of the voice of the man to whom she owed her life. He felt instinctively that this woman was pure and good, uncorrupted by the licentiousness of the class to which she belonged. The very ardor of her confession convinced him of the simplicity of her soul, for an experienced woman would have been much more verbose, and much less emotional on the occasion. What should he do? Should he yield to the dictates of a nature as unsophisticated as hers? Should he reveal to her his name and thus put it in her power to thwart his purposes? No, he dare not. If his avowal would have simply imperiled his own interests or life, it would not have mattered, and affected only himself. But his secret involved the welfare of many thousands and he felt that he had not the right to imperil their interests. This girl might be good, pure and noble, but she was frail like other human beings, and might betray her discovery under the pressure of excitement or emotion. The girl construed his continued silence as a refusal to comply with her desire, so she tore the mask from her face with an impetuous jerk, exclaiming at the same time impressively: "Now, do you recognize me?"

The face he saw was truly like a sudden revelation. On the night of the riot he had lacked both the time and inclination, to study her features. Consequently her impetuous act was like a sudden inspiration. And this was what he saw:

The girl was tall, only about a head lower than himself,

a circumstance which brought her face close to his own, and caused her breath to fan his cheek. A glorious mass of golden hair crowned her shapely head. Her face formed an oval of almost perfect proportions. Her features were of the Grecian type, her eyes blue and deep, like the well in which the sky is reflected. Her complexion was pure and delicate, and the rosy lips of a sweet mouth so tempting, that a frenzied desire to kiss it rose in Richard's mind, to be quelled, of course, as rapidly as it had been born. Her figure was wrapped in the loose folds of her nun's habit, but Richard had no doubt that it was as faultless as her face, for nature is no bungler, and seldom does her work by halves. Our friend struggled a few seconds with his feelings, then said: "It is hardly fair to call to your aid such matchless beauty—"

She interrupted him with a cry of anguish.

"I ask you for the bread of life," she moaned, "and you turn me off with compliments."

Obeying a sudden impulse, he seized her hand and pressed it fervently to his lips. Then he said:

"You do not know what you ask of me. I am not what I seem and my incognito involves the safety of many people."

"I do not care who or what you are. I know you must be, you *are* good and noble. That is enough for me. I do not care even to know your name; but I beg you to permit and to accept the outpourings of a grateful heart. Oh! do not deny your identity any longer. Confess to me that you are the hero who, at the peril of his life, rescued me from a terrible fate."

"Have it your own way, then, excepting the hero, which I cannot admit. *You* were the heroine that night, madam."

"Oh, I thank you with all my heart for this confession," she cried joyously, seizing both his hands and pressing them with fervor. "And—and--you say that I cannot see you again, that some mysterious fetter binds your lips and hands?"

"Yes. It is folly in me to admit even this, but I feel that

you are true and honest, and that you will not abuse my confidence. I would tell you more, but the welfare of thousands is involved in my discretion, so I must forbear."

"You are right, no doubt. You have accepted my gratitude and that is all I wanted. A heavy load is taken off my mind, and I shall leave you, for my people may miss me. Before we part, however, I want to tell you that my name is Blanche Cheatham and—"

"Cheatham?" he interrupted her almost fiercely. "Did you say Cheatham, madam!"

"I did" she replied wonderingly; "what is the matter? why does my name excite you so?"

"Oh never mind—it was only a passing fancy. Are you the daughter of, of—"

"Senator Cheatham?" she completed. "Yes I am his daughter. My father has money and influence, and if ever you need his help—"

He shook his head vehemently, saying: "No, no, not *his* help, not *his*."

"You seem to bear him ill," she resumed. "Well, my help, then. If ever you need it call on me, and I shall bless you. You cannot tell me your name I suppose?" she added, smiling sadly.

He shook his head.

"Be it so then. I have seen your face, have heard your voice. That will do me for the rest of my life. Farewell? She pressed her face against his hands, then said once more: "Farewell?" and turning her back, glided from the room. For a moment he felt an almost mad desire to draw her into his arms, and shower a thousand kisses on her face; then he felt a sudden dizziness seize him, causing him to grasp the edge of the table in support. When he recovered a few seconds later, she had vanished.

CHAPTER XVIII.

FLUCTUATIONS.

The human soul is like the ocean or the atmosphere, rarely at rest, and moved, now by joy, now by grief, and very frequently by fierce and violent passions. Richard that night did not await the hour of unmasking. He felt that he could not a second time stand before these eloquent and pleading eyes without melting away before them like the snow before the sirocco. He invented some excuse to leave his friends, and on reaching the solitude of his room, walked its length much like the tiger recently taken from its jungles and placed into a cage. Never before, perhaps, had he met with such a powerful temptation. While his duty, the vow he had taken in the face of heaven and earth, the promise to the memory of a dear mother beckoned one way, an alluring face clothed in all the charms of beauty, innocence, goodness and loveliness, drew the other. It was no easy battle our friend fought that night. In vain did he say to himself, "you have no business to love. You have devoted your life to your race; have, so to speak, married humanity. To draw a gentle, tender, frail, inexperienced being into the vortex of your agitated existence, would not be merely folly—it would be criminal. And then *this* girl above all others; she, the daughter of the man that killed your parents. She, the sister of the man that wrecked the happiness of your sister. She, the child of wealth, luxury and ease. Why, man, it is absurd to think of such a thing, much more to entertain the idea seriously and permanently. Arouse yourself, Richard, buckle on the armor of your strength, and destroy without mercy a phantom, threatening to unman you, and to crush resolutions so noble, aspirations so grand, and obligations so binding."

All these things he said to himself, but the dawn of morning stole into his room, without bringing strength. "I love her," his heart cried. "I love her with every fibre of my being" and he who knows human nature, knows also that such a

voice is hard to quell, and that he who does succeed in this task, can well boast of Herculean strength. When the sun peeped into Richard's room, he said to himself: "I cannot crush this feeling. Well, I will run away from it. I will, I *must* leave this place, until I have torn this feeling from my heart."

Idle threat? Idle resolution? You may kill your heart, but you cannot kill the impulses with which Nature has imbued it.

When he appeared at breakfast the ladies noticed his apathy and weariness.

"Why, Richard, I am surprised," Mrs. Kean cried playfully. "It seems you cannot bear these mighty revels. Look at me, an old woman; look at your sister. We are both fresh like roses in the dew of morning, while you appear perfectly used up."

"It is a fact, aunty, I am used up, and think a change of scenery will do me good. I'll pack my trunk to day, and take a stroll through the length and breadth of the country."

"Why, Richard, you alarm me. I was only in fun. Do you really feel fatigued?"

"More mentally than physically, Aunt Laura. If you were in fun, I am in earnest, and really propose to take a little trip. The change of scenery will build me up again, I reckon."

Richard Velder, however, was not the only person whose feelings were deeply stirred by the occurrences of that memorable evening. General Runwell received a note the following morning to the effect that Senator Cheatham would like to meet him at the club rooms at eight that evening. The General complied, and when the two met, they gazed at one another in mutual silence before they spoke.

"Do you understand it General?" the statesman finally put in.

"Deuced, if I do. It beats me that that thing leaked out. Do you think it could have been the waiter?"

"I am sure it wasn't. Even if he had listened at the key-

hole, he could not have heard our conversation. You go outside and listen, to convince yourself."

The General did so, the Senator speaking in rather a loud key. When he re-entered, the other inquired: "Are you satisfied?"

"I am as to the waiter, but that only deepens the mystery. Did you examine the walls? May be there is some hiding place which has escaped us."

"I have tested the walls and found them solid. It beats me, and makes me nervous. It isn't at all pleasant to have you watched and exposed in this manner."

"What did the fellow write to you?"

The Senator handed him the note.

"Hm! He does not threaten, but implies a threat. What are you going to do about it?"

"Do about it? Go ahead, of course. Do you think Senator Cheatham is the man to shrink from a shadow?"

"This is a pretty substantial shadow, Senator. I, for my part, prefer to withdraw from the agreement. I do not wish to have my name paraded in the papers."

The other smiled contemptuously. "Show the white feathers?" he asked with a sneer. "I call that queer in a military man."

"Well, you may smile as much as you please, Mr. Cheatham. You politicians are used to having your names and character hauled over the coals every day in the year, but with a soldier it is a different thing. Let the country once know that he dabbles in politics and takes to wire pulling, and his fate is sealed. He'll never rise to the top of the ladder."

"Didn't Brant dabble in politics?"

"Yes after he had climbed to the top, not before."

"Well, I am sorry, that is all, sorry for you I mean, for you are throwing away a plank which would have raised you to a high position."

"You are ambiguous, Senator," the General said with a smile. "I know of high positions not at all to my liking."

The statesman smiled a forced smile. "Hang it all" he cried angrily, I wish I could get hold of this fellow. Wonder how he crawled in anyhow. He must have forged his ticket, for no one in our set would have humored such a cad."

The General looked at him fixedly: "I think you are mistaken Mr. Cheatham" he said impressively. In my opinion the carrier was one of our own set. That is the worst feature in the ugly business. *Our own men are going back on us.*"

"I can't believe it, I won't believe it. What in the devil's name could induce them?"

"Did you never hear of the rats that leave the sinking ship?"

The other started and looked vexed. "General," he cried with an attempt at cheerfulness. "You are an old owl, shame on you. Waiter, bring us a bottle of old port. You make a fellow nervous. Here is a toast to which I want you to respond: The upper crust backed by a strong army."

"I have no objection, I am sure. But say Senator, what got into your son? When did he conceive this sudden freak of a European tour?"

"The devil knows, I don't."

"May be he got a letter, too."

The statesman started again. "Possibly but not likely. Cy has looked too deep into the cup of pleasure, I fear, and sees the necessity of prudence. I don't care much, for Cy did not do anything but spend money, a trick of which one gets tired at last."

"I have no doubt of it. By the way, I learn that Miss Cheatham is to link her name with that of a foreign nobleman. Is it too early to offer my congratulations?"

"Damn all foreign noblemen!" the statesman cried, his eyes blazing and his hand putting the wine glass so heavily upon the table as to smash it to pieces. Then recollecting his companion and the place, he said apologetically: "Pardon my violence, General. Fact is, this confounded note, together with vexing family affairs have unstrung me to such a degree

as to treat my best friends in this manner. Fact is, Blanche has refused the Count, the little fool. I tell you this to explain my temper. Trust you will make no use of this confidential communication."

The general promised, but after he had left the Senator, he looked after him with a mixture of pity and wonderment, muttering to himself: "H'm, he is in a bad fix. His wife, a frozen statue; his son, a wreck, and now his daughter a rebel against paternal authority. Senator Cheatham, I think, your ship is leaky, and the rats teach one a lesson worthy of remembrance."

Blanche Cheatham was another party which took home much material for thought from the masked ball. On the whole her thoughts were of a cheerful character. She had seen, or rather heard him again, who had not only rescued her, but filled her mind ever since, to the exclusion of everything else. Before this meeting she had only thought of him as her deliverer, as a hero, as a being to be admired and looked up to. If she had had our experience, dear reader, she would have known, that with women, to admire is almost always to love. She had loved Richard from that evening, without knowing it herself, and the existence of this love had probably nerved her for, and sustained her in conflict with paternal authority. When her mother met her at breakfast on the following morning, she looked not only not tired, but so happy, nay radiant, that her mother said with a smile: "Masked balls seem to agree with you, my daughter. You look as if you had had a draught of the fountain of everlasting youth."

Now, between this mother and this daughter, there was trust, as perfect as it is rare. The pure soul of the girl presented the limpidness of the Spring, showing every sentiment to the bottom. She embraced her mother with her usual fervor, then said, hiding her face on the other's bosom: "I have had such a draught, mother dear. I met him at the ball last night."

"Met whom, little one?" her mother asked with some concern. When a mother hears her daughter speak of "him,"

she blusters a good deal like the hen, which scents the hawk in the air.

"Why, *him*, don't you know?" Blanche asked a little petulantly, as if she thought it preposterous to think of any one but the demigod in question.

"Indeed, I do not. You haven't told me that you think of any one particularly,"

The girl blushed and said, hiding her face deeper in the maternal bosom: "Until yesterday, I only dreamt of him, mamma."

"And now you *think* of him, eh? Well, that is startling news. May I inquire, who *he* is?"

"I could not tell you, mamma, for I do not know his name."

"Don't know his name, and yet dream, yea think of him. That is rather strange. Can't you give me the clue to that mystery?"

"I can and will, mamma, far as I am able."

And then she told her of her rendezvous with the stranger witholding neither facts nor feelings, causing her mother to exclaim with much concern, after she had finished.

"Blanche, my dear girl, I fear you love this man."

"I know I do, mamma. I have known it ever since last night. But I do not fear, dear mother, I *rejoice*, for to love him is to exclude fear."

"But he says himself, that he is engaged in some dangerous business, and that he—"

"It may be dangerous, but it must be honorable, or he would not pursue it."

"He may be one of those enthusiastic dreamers who pretend to aim at the elevation of the masses, exposing their lives to deadly attacks by both foe and friend."

"Whatever it is mother, it must be noble, else he would not embrace it,"

"You are of strong faith child, and I almost envy you, for such faith exalts, while slavery of any kind degrades and debases. But such a passion of yours leads too often to disap-

pointment as gratification. You may never see your hero again, poor child."

"Then I shall feast upon his memory. Even such a feast will glorify a long life, and guard against the contamination of everything low and evil."

Mrs. Cheatham embraced her daughter, saying: "You are a noble girl, Blanche, but too exalted for the standard of happiness used by the world. Martyrs are more frequently made of such material than Fortune's favorites. May heaven grant that you will form an exception!"

The next morning witnessed the departure of Richard Velder, who disappeared somewhere between Plutopolis and Lakeopolis, to remain unearthed for quite a while, if not forever, as Richard Brown told Duncan on his arrival in the latter city. The delight of the little family at the sight of the tinker was great. Alice went even so far as to kiss him repeatedly, a demonstration applauded vigorously by her husband, who declared that Dick was a fellow of whom you couldn't get jealous in spite of yourself. After they had petted him to their heart's content, and feasted and fed him to a dangerous extent, they informed him of the condition of the brotherhood in Lakeopolis. It was highly satisfactory, according to their account. "We have nearly a million members in the West, Dick," Charles reported, "and I should not at all wonder, if the South could muster as many; which, with the East, would make the total membership about four millions. Deduct from this number the sisters and we have a grand total of three million men capable of bearing arms—and using them, too," Duncan emphasized. "Your remittances have been put to a good purpose, for we now turn out a hundred rifles per day. The trouble is, they are so good that they are gobbled up by outsiders nearly as fast as we can make them."

"Let them go, Charley. We can use every penny they will bring. Are our men pretty well supplied now?"

"About two thirds, I should say. I think three months from now they will all have their weapons; that is,

those we have now. Indeed, I couldn't begin to think of making rifles as fast as our cause makes converts."

"That's a good fault, Charley. I think in one year from now we can and should begin to exercise our influence upon the political arena of the nation."

"Won't our debut be a caution, though?" Charles exclaimed, chuckling at the idea of the great surprise he expected to give to the world. "I think sometimes that we ought to show our hand in local politics at once, to gain support in the municipal and State authorities; but the surprise we'll give them will indemnify me for all this delay."

"I do not care much for the surprise, Charley, as the stunning defeat we shall inflict upon the two old rotten parties. If our brotherhood increases at its present rate, we shall be able to carry every State, elect our President, and all the members of the lower house of Congress."

"So we shall, but mind me; the Senate will offer us a determined resistence. They are all millionaires, you know."

"That is true enough, but they are but human. Turn the pressure of seventy millions upon them, and they will yield."

"I trust they will, but it will be safe to count upon a desperate resistance on their part."

"I am prepared for that, friend. We must avoid violence to the extreme. If we cannot get their consent, we must wait until the Senate is filled with our men, or until we have a majority there, which will at most take four years. Charles Duncan, I predict, if things progress favorably, if we grow at our present rate, Nationalism will be introduced in Occidentia within six years."

"Stop, Richard, you make me dizzy. My fondest hopes to become reality in so short space of time, and I to live and see the emancipation of millions from a slavery worse than that of color! Richard, it is almost too good to become real."

"It is only hope so often thwarted, expectation so sadly foiled, calculation so poorly verified which make you so despondent, Duncan. Fortunately it is not hope, not expectation

or calculation upon which we base our plans. It is solid facts already achieved; preparations completed, faithful hearts won and sturdy arms ready for strife to the bitter end if necessary, which justify my prediction, that, *in six years Nationalism*, that is *justice*, *equity* and *brotherly love will shape the destiny of the people* of *Occidentia*."

"Amen, and hurrah;" cried Duncan.

This active life in a measure restored Richard's peace of mind. Once more the great problem of his life assumed the prominent place in his mind, to which it was entitled, but deep in the recesses of his heart, in the fanciful realms of his imagination a never to be forgotten image ruled supreme, its sway being despotic in proportion to its boundlessness. There the murder of his parents could not enter, the seducer of his sister mar his visions. Yes, if this image could never become sufficiently tangible to kiss his lips, smooth his brow, sooth his soul, weary from the contact of a prosaic world, in his soul, at least he could build it shrines, and lay upon them the best emotions, the purest feelings and the most exalted conceptions of his soul.

Richard found it necessary to draw the bond of union of the various lodges tighter, and to give the leaders of the sections a deeper insight into his plans and expectations. So he commenced a second tour through the land, addressing eloquent appeals to the masses, and meeting the leaders in secret council. He pointed out to them the nearness of the moment, when their principles must prevail, and so logic were his deductions, so clear his proofs and so evident his means of fulfilling his promises, that uncertainty was changed into confidence, incredulity to conviction. He told them the necessity of constant vigilance, of increased activity. He proved to them that to stand still, is to recede, and that the united efforts of every member were required to bring about the result so fondly anticipated. This journey occupied fully three months, and it was only after he had visited the remotest sections of the country and inspired the smallest lodges with new life, hope and zeal, that he dared to listen to the still

voice within him, urging the propriety of a return to Plutopolis. It was the beginning of July when Richard stepped into the grocery where he was greeted with shouts of delight.

"Why, Mr. Brown, where have you been all this time?" cried the Professor, shaking both his hands vigorously, "I have not seen you for a century."

"Was it that long?" inquired Richard, with a smile.

"Well, you need not be so particular about a month or two. But where is Bertha? You don't know, I suppose, that my niece was found, nay, rescued by Mr. Velder? Bertha, Bertha—Ah, here she is—Bertha, this is Mr. Brown, who befriended your uncle when all the world had turned its back to him. Dick, this is my niece, Bertha Rasmussen, a pretty good and docile child, I—if I *do* say it in her face."

"Don't believe him, Mr. Brown," the child cried, shaking her pretty head, warningly. "His love for me makes uncle blind."

"Ah, it is well for you, to thus qualify your assertion," the Professor said, roguishly, "else I might have taken you to task for calling me a liar."

Thus they chatted and joked until Richard said he must pay a visit to the Velders. He started for his house, feeling keenly the inconvenience of his double character and determining to end it at the earliest convenience. He sent in his name as Mr. Brown, and was requested to step into the sitting room, where he found not only Mrs. Kean and Elinor, but also Maxwell, who stared at him, wondering what business the tinker could have with the ladies. As soon as the servant had closed the door, Richard embraced Elinor, who struggled violently under this daring familiarity of a stranger, but was nevertheless heartily kissed before she could disengage herself. Maxwell sprung to his feet, and was just on the point of seizing the intruder and eject him from the room, when the audacious fellow walked up to Mrs. Kean and hugged and kissed her in fine style, carresses which she not merely endured, but even returned with emphasis. Maxwell began to doubt his own identity, and was on the point of pinching

himself to see whether he was awake or dreaming, when the saucy stranger stepped up to him, extended his hand and said: "How do, Maxwell? Been well all this time? How are you and Elinor getting on? Is the day set, or are you going to await the return of that harumscarum, Velder?"

Maxwell stood like one perfectly bewildered, hesitating to accept his proffered hand.

"'Tis clean, sir," Richard said, with a laugh; "we tinkers make it a point to keep hands as well as conscience clean, a boast which some of your nabobs cannot make or rather sustain."

At this moment Elinor flung herself once more into the tinker's arms, to the boundless consternation of her lover, who began to fear that the whole crew had gone crazy, until Elinor turned to him, saying with one peal of laughter after another. "Why it is brother Dick, you stupid boy, don't you see? You need not boast of your keenness hereafter, for it is my humble self that has sharper eyes than you."

"Your brother!" Maxwell ejaculated, still dazed by this unexpected development of things, laying, however his hand cautiously into the other's. "I declare, I begin to see it now. So you are the famous tinker, and have been playing possum all this while? Do you know that I do not feel quite safe in the presence of such a formidable anarchist?"

"Being a swell, you have good reasons to be scared and cautious. I eat one nabob regularly every day, but having breakfasted on one this morning, you are safe for the remainder of the day."

"Thanks for that assuring piece of information. And Aunt Laura was the only one in the plot? I am looking for revelations both startling and interesting. Arn't you, Elinor?"

"I am Lucius; so make a clean breast of it, and quick, or this poor boy will die. Talk of a woman's curiosity! Why, a man's beats it all hollow. I bet a dollar poor Lucius will die if you don't unburden before to-night."

"Quite a tempting prospect," Richard said laughingly, "for in that case there would be one aristocrat less."

"And my only chance of getting a man" Elinor cried, laughing gaily, "no brother, you surely could not be so cruel."

"Well, the prospects of getting you off my hands really deserves some consideration, so I may as well make a clean breast of it." Suddenly his face became very serious, and looking gravely into Maxwell's face, he added: "Maxwell, the communication I am going to make are a stronger proof of my faith in your secrecy, your discretion and your honor, than a thousand mere professions to that effect. Nor is it your honor alone in which I have perfect confidence, but your sagacity as well. True, you belong to the upper crust, that is, to the people who live in luxury and idleness, at the expense of their less fortunate brethren; but you are neither blind nor obtuse and have probably read many signs pointing to a radical change in the condition of society. If you *have* been blind, my relations will open your eyes, as I can prove every assertion I am going to advance. I do not demand of you any pledges of secrecy, for such demands would imply a distrust which I do not feel, and an insult to a man I honor and love. Are you ready for my communications? Remember that they involve the weal of millions. If you feel as if you should not assume the obligation of secrecy imposed upon you by honor, say so, and I will spare you from the knowledge of things which may disturb and worry you."

Maxwell thought a moment, then took Richard's hand and said, earnestly: "Dick, you are considerably personified. I think I understand you, and surely appreciate your sentiments for me. In reply I would say: A man of your character cannot possibly engage in anything low and dishonorable, so go on."

"I thank you in turn, Lucius, and now listen, both of you, for you will hear strange and startling things."

Then our friend gave Maxwell a concise, but exhaustive sketch of his life, of his parents' fate, and the charge of his dying mother. He explained how his own investigations, studies and experiences had verified his mother's denunciation of a cruel and selfish minority, and had given strength, depth

and character to the resolutions evoked by his dying mother. He sketched his preparations, his labors, his disappointments, his hopes and his just expectations, ending with the firm conviction that the rejuvenation of society and more humane condition of affairs were close at hand. Maxwell had not interrupted him by word or gesture. Man of the world and experience, though he was, he did not share with many of his caste, the error of an underestimation of the probability of an impending crisis. Richard's communications furnished Maxwell with a new scale to measure the rare gifts of Richard Velder, or, as he called himself now, Richard Brown. He knew well what such a man can accomplish; indeed he could not help seeing what he had accomplished already. He did not doubt the statement that four millions of intelligent inhabitants of Occidentia had sworn to his colors, and that they would stand by him at the crisis. Nor could he help perceiving that this scheme was as lofty and gigantic as any ever concocted by a human brain. Finally he could not help acknowledging the truth and correctness of Richard's assertions in regard to the unjust distributions of the pleasures as well as labors of life.

All these things, we say, he admitted; but having hitherto floated on the current of an easy and luxurious life, he had never troubled himself about evils which in his opinion, were not of his making, and, morever beyond his strength to remedy. Perhaps he had at times felt dimly conscious of the unfairness of his life, but such an indistinct feeling and the burning conviction of his friend were two very different things, and it was now, perhaps, the first time that this consciousness assumed a more definite form, and a troublesome character. Yet, while these feelings agitated his mind, the reader must not imagine that such a devotee of pleasure, ease and recreation, could all at once awaken to the unworthiness of his position. He had too long enjoyed the privileges of his caste, to think at once of surrendering them, and, while he was determined to justify Richard's confidence, he was by no means prepared to make common cause with him.

"You are an enthusiast, Richard," he said when the other had ended, "and a noble one in the bargain. But do you not forget that to do justice to the people, you do injustice to their oppressors as you call them?"

"I do not, Maxwell. In which way would I wrong them?"

"By depriving them of their means of existence."

"I beg your pardon, I, or rather we have no such intention."

"Are you going to despoil the rich of that which is justly theirs?"

"Justly, Maxwell? Will you please tell me what creates all wealth?"

"Various things, such as labor speculations—,"

"You are mistaken. Speculation does not create wealth, it merely changes it. If you speculate in lands or goods you simply abuse the necessities of your neighbors by charging them exhorbant prices. If your corner lots double in value you do not mean to tell me that you increase the wealth of the community, simply shifting their money from their pockets into yours? No, no," he continued, when he perceived that his friend remained silent. "Labor is the only source of wealth. How then does it come that the laborer, the producer of this wealth, remains poor, while the idler becomes wealthy? Don't you see that he takes an undue portion and that the abuse of this undue portion, that is, speculation, constantly increases his wealth at the expense of the producer?"

Maxwell did not reply, perhaps because he could not, so Richard went on: "You know as well as I that the immense fortunes of the country have not been made by labor, but by speculation. The original speculators died, leaving their wealth to their children. Now I ask you simply and plainly: Does this circumstance make it any more right for the children to keep and enjoy this wealth, than was the case with the parents, that is, the original robbers?"

"You use harsh terms, Richard," Maxwell said, with the grimace.

"But just ones; or don't you call a man that steals, a robber? Let us take the case of the Irish, for instance. I need not tell you that Edward the II., I believe, conquered Ireland, and gave the land of the inhabitants to his nobles, whose descendants hold them now. Do you think their title would stand for a moment, if equity had to decide?"

"The courts of the country, do, at all events."

"You are equivocating. It is against the existing laws our efforts are directed, because they are partial and unjust. In moral law, or, if you prefer, in justice pure and simple, the descendants of these robbers have no title to the estates they hold. No more have the children of the millionaires of this or any other country, and a movement designing the spoliation of such owners could hardly be accused of injustice. Besides, if the nation assumes their wealth, they still are co-owners not only of their former wealth, but that of their neighbors, as well."

"It is easy for an outsider to talk that way, Richard."

Richard colored. "You forget, Maxwell, that I am *not* an outsider, that I have already spent millions in this cause, and propose to spend every cent I own for the benefit of the people."

"Yes, I know you are unselfish, Richard," the other said, hastily. "Nor did I mean any reflection on you personally. But you must confess that many of these innovators desire nothing more or less than to enrich themselves at our expense."

"There are few such people, Maxwell, I admit; but I have been much amongst these people, and I assure you that on the whole, selfishness taints them much less than the rich. It is the very low and ignorant that reason and work that way, and it is for this reason I want everybody to be educated and enlightened."

"Well, there is much truth in what you say, and I will think it all over, but for the present you must pardon me if I

stand aloof from a movement which may result in the wreck and ruin of society."

"I expect nothing else. Nor will I worry you by preaching and attempts at conversation; but mark what I tell you now: You cannot take in the light of truth without becoming affected by it, and if you will investigate my doctrines carefully and impartially, you cannot help becoming a convert to our cause."

"If I do, I shall make an honest confession."

"That's all I can and do expect."

CHAPTER XIX.

FACING THE TIGER IN HIS JUNGLE.

We do not head this chapter "Bearding the lion in his den," because the lion is said to have some noble traits, that of generosity and magnanimity, for instance. Whether these epithets are justly his due, we shall not discuss at this place although we seriously doubt it. The tiger, on the other hand, is not only more blood-thirsty, but also more treacherous, and to face him in his native haunt, the jungle, requires nerve and presence of mind, virtues which we wish to impress before hand upon the reader, hence the superscription.

Richard took his abode for the present in the grocery, many considerations counseling such a measure for a while at least. He did, however, no longer carry his apparatus, nor did he grind the shears of tailors, the scissors of house wives, or the knives of butchers. It was not so much the masses he sought, as the presence of the leaders, discussing with them measures too important and perilous to be entrusted to the masses before the proper moment. These deliberations, however, soon showed results. In almost every ward, excepting those devoted exclusively to business or occupied by the palaces of the rich, large buildings were either purchased and then modified, or erected anew. All of them contained large basements

or cellars in which kitchens or restaurants were located, not so much for the present accommodation of the members or the public, as for future emergencies, such as strikes, garrisons and the like. Of course, being established, they were used, dispensing food at low prices to the poor and needy, thus serving from the start as highly useful and timely measures. In other apartments the members stored the rifles with which they were equipped in their capacity of military organizations. Finally each edifice contained a large hall or lecture room, in which able men taught the members political economy, natural science, and in the case of women—cookery. We need hardly add that Professor Andersen played a conspicious role in these exercises, having declaired his intention to remain in Occidentia even at the risk of loosing his pension The membership of Plutopolis had long since outgrown the dimensions of National Hall, and it seemed actually as if the acquisition of new places of meeting was all that was needed to give the order a new and ever more wonderful start than that heralded before. Duncan doubled, yes, trebled his forces, yet could hardly keep pace with the demand for rifles pouring in from all sides. Richard did everything in his power to counsel prudence and moderation on the part of the members, knowing full well that the foes of public freedom would jump at every chance to frighten the timid and cautious. On the whole he succeeded, but occasionally the cruder and deeply ignorant portion of his followers could not be totally refrained from manifesting a spirit well calculated to alarm not merely the timid, but even Richard himself. He therefore continued to urge the acquisition of more knowledge. "More light? More light!" he cried, with Goethe at every opportunity.

Thus the summer and fall wore away, and, with the month of December, Congress once more assembled in the Capital of Patropolis. Richard was not a little startled by reading in the daily papers that Senator Cheatham had announced his intention, immediately after the introductory exercises, to offer a military bill to the Senate after the holidays,

stating in a preamble his reasons for such a step. He pointed to the growing Indian troubles, the war clouds rising frequently on the political horizon and the danger of complications with rival powers. Thirdly, he pointed to the danger growing out of internal commotions, and dissimination of socialistic and even anarchical doctrines, and the open avowal of the poor to compel a surrender of the wealth of the monied classes. He pointed to the unreliability of the militia on such occasions, and declared it to be his intention to move an increase of the regular army to one hundred thousand men.

He seemed to have made this announcement purposely at an early date, to occasion a discussion of the measure and the disappearance of the first heat, which such a design would undoubtedly produce. He probably also desired to belabor the press, knowing full well the folly of the idea that the press presents the public sentiment and is guided by it. He knew very well that the press, like the pulpit, is but too often influenced by interest, knowing full well where their bread is buttered.

Richard studied deep and carefully before he decided upon a course of conduct. He did not wish to have this measure carried and executed, knowing full well that the existence of large military forces begets a desire to use them, and that a struggle against a hundred thousand men, well drilled and equipped with all instruments of war, might provoke a fearful slaughter, dreadful to contemplate, even in case of success, of which he felt sure under all circumstances. His first warning had caused a delay, that was all, and a new and stronger pressure must be applied to secure a new respite. What should he do? What could he do?

Write again? He could say nothing more intimidating than his first missive. No, writing would not answer the purpose. Should he go in person and scare the fellow by the intimation of personal danger or exposure of old short comings? His natural fairness shrank from such a course, but this bill must be killed in the bud, even at the expense of the Senator's feelings. The paper giving the above news, stated also

that the Senator was expected to spend Christmas at home, so here was an opportunity to carry out his plan if he were bent upon its execution.

Richard did not decide at once, but the more he thought of the idea, the more he liked it. Its very boldness possessed a fascination to one so fearless as our friend. It was then fully two weeks to the holidays so there was no hurry to decide the matter, but it was nevertheless decided on the very next morning. When he returned home that night he found Maxwell, who informed him that Elinor had consented to marry him on Christmas. "I tell you this early" he said banteringly, "to prevent you from flying off at a tangent at that time. You better make a memorandum of the fact, old fellow or you'll stray off in a fit of absent mindedness. By the way, Dick, did I tell you that Runwell is sweet on that little Swede at the grocery?"

"Is he? No, you did not, I hope he has honest intentions, for, if not, I authorize you to tell him that I shall break every bone of his body for him."

"Oh, I think it is all right. The girl is very pretty, and what is more, lovable."

"Does she return his fancy?"

"I cannot tell, but Elinor thinks she does. I told the ladies and they have promised to take matters in hand and see that the little one does not come to harm."

"All right then. I think we can leave matters in their hands. It takes a woman to make matches you know."

Day followed day, and at last Christmas was at hand. Richard had resolved to let it pass, partly because his sister was to be wedded then, and partly from a natural repugnance to bring disquietude into a family at that time. He did not know why, but he had a certain forboding that his step would bring about startling, and perhaps ominous results. This presentiment, however, did not change his purpose, only causing a more deliberate taking of his measures. When the morning of the intended visit arrived, he opened his trunk and gazed a moment at the coat of mail, which he had secured in

Berlin, but never used. Should he put it on? He had no doubt that the man he meant to visit would put him out of the way in case of necessity, without any compunction, provided he could do so with safety and without any "éclat;" but in this instance the servant would announce him, and look for his departure as a natural consequence. No, he did not fear open violence on the part of the Senator. Besides he shrank from such a measure of precaution, indicating apprehension, moreover of a man whom he despised but did not fear. No, he would not put on the coat, so he again closed the trunk, disdaining even to arm himself with a revolver. He took the street car to the Cheatham mansion, and alighting and ascending the flight of stairs to the first floor, requesting the servant in waiting to announce to Mr. Cheatham his wish to see him.

"Whom shall I announce, Sir?"

"Brown, if you please."

Let us anticipate the footman and visit the statesman's study, or rather the library next to it. The study was a room of only moderate size, but the library was an apartment much more spacious. It was lined with book cases of the finest tropical wood, only the windows breaking the lines, the cases forming their deep recesses well fitted for retirement with a favorite author.

Now it happened that on this morning the door of one of the cases had been flung open, hiding not only one of the windows, but also an easy chair and its occupant, Miss Blanche Cheatham. She had come into the library at an early hour and retired to her snug corner, not with the view of concealment, for she had nothing to conceal, but because its seclusion agreed with her dreamy mood. She soon was deeply interested in Goethe's "Hermann und Dorothea" which she read fluently in the original, and which somehow struck a kindred chord in her soul. She was so absorbed that she failed to notice the entrance of her father in his study. The Senator walked to the door of the library which was open, not so much with the mien of a man who looks for something

especial, but rather with the abstraction of an occupied mind. The soft Brussel carpet made his footsteps almost inaudible, so Blanche failed to notice them and went on reading. The statesman walked leisurely to his arm chair, sank into its luxurious cushions, and taking up the paper began to glance over the telegraphic news. Congress adjourned, he read half aloud. Hon. Cheatham home to prepare his great military bill. The entire country astir over—Well, what is it?"

"Please, sir, there's a gentleman out there who wishes to speak to you."

"What's his name, John?"

"He says it is Brown, sir."

The Senator prided himself upon his popularity with the masses. He was easy of access, knowing fully well that it tickles the average citizen to feel himself as good as the best, and to shake hands with the big bugs of his country. So he said affably: "Show him in, sir, show him in."

John went out and a minute later Richard Brown stood before the Senator. There was something in his mien and bearing which attracted and chained the statesman's attention. He stood erect; his face looked calm and unmoved, and his clear, penetrating eyes rested so searchingly upon the Senator, as to cause him to lower his. Recovering himself instantly, however, he smiled affably at his visitor, saying with a slight inclination of his head: "How do you do, Mr. Brown. Please be seated; I understand that you desire to speak to me. What can I do for you?"

"No thanks; I will not trouble you long, and what I have to say, I can say standing."

He paused a moment and at the same time there was a slight fluster in the library. Richard had not spoken loud, but his voice had a metallic ring, which sent it over much space. The voice of the servant had been overheard by Blanche; the words of her father had not touched a chord within her, but when Richard's clear tones vibrated in the air, she heard them and became alert. Thus it is that the strings of one harp vibrate to the music of another. Her heart strings have been

touched, and lo! They correspond. At first she stands irresolute, an innate delicacy of feeling prompting her to avoid the role of eaves dropper, though unwilling; but the next words of the visitor chain her to the spot, and soon she is totally absorbed by the conversation in the study, as to cease to be a free agent. But hush! The voice resumes: "I learn from the papers, sir, that you will offer a military bill to the Senate on the re-opening of its sessions. Are the papers correct, sir?"

These words were so unexpected to the Senator, that they puzzled him for a moment; but thinking that he saw before him one of those political cranks one meets occasionally, he said good naturedly: "Yes, Mr. Brown, you have been rightly informed. I shall introduce such a bill before long."

"In that case I ask you in the name of the people of this country to desist, as such a measure is antagonistic to its true interests."

The other opened his eyes in great surprise, but adhering to his original estimate of the visitor, he said, in the same affable tone: "Well, this is a free country, Mr. Brown, and everybody can entertain such opinions as he pleases. But while I do not dispute your right in this respect, I claim the same, you see. This bill is the offspring of much and mature thought, and I must therefore, refuse your request of quashing it."

"Then, if you have no consideration for our country, Mr. Cheatham, consider your own interests. I tell you, not as a friend, but as a prophet: If you persist in offering this bill, it will ruin you as surely as the sun now shines in the heavens."

By this time the Senator had risen, and now stood before our friend in wonder and surprise. This was no crank, it was a fellow who presumed on his good nature and had come here for a purpose, which the Senator did not know, suspecting, however, that the bill was a mere pretense.

"Who are you?" he asked, changing his tone and assuming severity, instead of affability.

"Do you really want to know, Senator Cheatham?" Richard said, impressively, coming one step nearer. "I would spare you, if I could, but fear you will not heed my warning, unless I tell you. I am the son of him you slew, the son of her you caused to die with a broken heart!"

The effect of these words on the Senator were startling. He shrank back in consternation, fumbling with his hand for support. His cheek paled, his eyes became like petrified, dwelling upon the visitor with unspeakable horror. His lips tried to formulate some words, and finally stammered the one word "Woods."

"Your memory serves you well, Senator Cheatham, I am the son of those good and noble people, whom your fiendish hatred sent to an early grave. Oh, fear nothing. I could have slain you a dozen times if I had wished, but the last wish of a dying mother makes you safe as far as I am concerned. Nor would I have intruded here if you had not formed this tyrannical scheme against the people. Again I say: Beware! Again I warn you and prophecy that the mere introduction of such a measure will achieve your ruin. I now offer you this compromise.: You abandon this scheme against my native land, I, on my part shall endeavor to forget that the persecution of my dearest friends on earth, originated with Senator Cheatham."

The Senator seemed to awaken suddenly as from a trance. His terror vanished and an uncontrolable rage at being thus braved in his own house, seized him. The recollection of his momentary fright undoubtedly fanned his fury, being by no means flattering to his manhood. Foam gathered on his lips, and he hissed more than spoke.

"You dare to threaten me? Out with you, or I shall shoot you like a dog."

Richard stood unmoved. Folding his arms on his breast he said sternly, but calmly: "You won't listen, then? Very well, there will be war then between us, and may the righteous cause win."

He faced the enraged man a moment longer, then seized

his hat and turned to leave the room, when a howl of rage caused him to look back. He saw the Senator spring toward a bureau, jerk open a drawer, snatch from it a revolver, and with it in hand turn once more upon his antagonist. What now followed occurred so rapidly that Richard retained of it only an instinct recollection or rather the impressions were interwoven into one like the picture of a region seen from a railway train dashing on at the rate of sixty miles an hour. He remembered that the Senator turned upon him; then he heard a cry of agony and the frightened exclamation "father." Next he saw a white figure flit through the room, and a second later, felt two soft arms entwine themselves around his neck while almost at the same time a pistol shot rang through the room. He felt the finger tremble, he heard a cry of pain, then felt the arms around his neck relaxing their hold, but it was more instinct than conscious reasoning which caused him to encircle it with his arms. In doing so he felt something warm running over his fingers, and looking down, saw them stained with a purple fluid. Then the terrible consciousness that she had been wounded, perhaps killed, in her efforts to save his life, came to him, almost overpowering him. Nothing but the precious burden in his arms saved the other's life at that moment.

"Monster! You have killed her?" he cried in an agony of pain, looked at the same time for a place to lay the unconscious girl. At that moment a second pistol shot rang through the air, but Richard was too occupied to know its cause or care for its results. What we record now, he learned from others. They told him that the would-be murderer had staggered back in consternation at the result of his fury. He stumbled over a hassock in his rear, and in his attempt to righten himself, threw up his arms. In doing so he must have clutched his hand, thus pulling the trigger, for a report followed, and when the servants rushed in they found him lying on the floor, blood streaming over his face, and one eye injured, if not destroyed. The shot must have been fired parallel with his face, for it had pierced the bone of the nose

and just glanced the left eye. All this he learned afterwards as we said before, for just at that moment the fate of the statesman was of no consequence to him, nor to the pale mother who kneeled at her daughter's side, sponging her face with cold water and watching with a gleam of despair in her eyes, for signs of returning consciousness. A moment later rapid footsteps drew near, and a physician leaned over the prostrate figure.

"Where is the wound? In her back? Turn her then, sir. You need not fear to hurt her, she is unconscious. Ah, it is the shoulder, and no bones broken, it seems."

"You think she will live?" Mrs. Cheatham cried in breathless suspense.

"I think she will, in fact, I *know* she will, for the wound is too high up, to have touched any vital spot. I will probe the wound and try to draw the bullet before she comes to. Ah, here it is. All right now madam. This was a mighty lucky accident indeed. Now let me dress the wound. If no fever sets in she will be all right in a couple of weeks."

Just then a quiver passed through the senseless body. Next a pair of limpid blue eyes opened, sending a dazed glance over her surroundings. Then consciousness returned, her look became anxious and exclaimed, trying to rise. "Where-where is he? Has he killed him?"

Richard could not resist the impetus which urged him to bend over her, and his eyes must have spoken volumes of tenderness, for an expression of great happiness came over her face, while she murmured: "Safe! safe!"

Then she sank back and the physician, an old practitioner who probably devined a romance, but was too prudent to betray his thoughts, said peremptorily: "No nonsense now. Take hold of this lounge, young fellows," addressing some servants, "and carry it to Miss Blanche's room. I interdict all excitement, for if fever sets in, the wound may give us a great deal of trouble. Gently now, lads, gently."

Richard wanted to assist, but the doctor motioned him back with a smile. "Not you, sir. She must have rest and

tranquility. Now I must see what my colleague thinks of the Senator's case. I fear he won't get off quite so easy."

Richard never knew exactly how he got out of the mansion on that memorable morning. He indistinctly recollected to have bowed to a pale, frozen figure, and to have expressed deep regret at the consequences of a visit prompted by pure and noble motives. The figure had then pressed his hand, saying something about her conviction of the truth of his professions, adding that her daughter's faith in him was all the guarantee she desired. She had ended by expressing the hope of seeing him again, and glided away to the chamber where her daughter lay, suffering from a wound received in his behalf. Sweet thought, yet tinctured with pain. The image repressed with so much pain and trouble into the recesses of his soul, once more came forth, filling ever nook and corner of his being, smiling sweetly, but defiantly at any attempt to shut it up once more into its prison. It did not speak, but it looked volumes, saying in that mute, yet eloquent way: "I have earned you now, my blood has flowed for you, I have become a martyr for your sake. Who can now dispute my right to you? Who can come between us? If you have grand, exalted plans, can I not share them? If you expose your life for the welfare of the people, can I not share your danger?" Thus it spoke all the way to his home, spoke all day; filling his dreams, and finally compelling a compromise, if not a surrender. Richard began to think that a woman so brave and devoted, might, after all, not be a drawback, but a help. True, he ran risks; his antagonists might waylay and kill him, but would the girl who had received a deadly wound for him, yes, probably saved his life, shrink from such dangers? It seemed really an insult to entertain such thoughts. Finally, as to her relation to the enemy of his family, the destroyer of his parents' lives. Was it right that she should suffer for a father's iniquity? He felt that his noble mother would scorn such an idea. He saw her even then smile sweetly and encouragingly upon him, and experienced a sweet peace stealing over him, quelling all doubts

and steeling his wavering purposes into the firm and unchangeable resolution of winning her. Strange, the difficulty of such an undertaking never once entered into his calculations. She was the daughter of a millionaire, the daughter, morever, of a man who probably entertained towards him the bitterest animosity, but nevertheless he was determined to try, nay to win. He knew that he possessed the love of this rare, beautiful and fearless girl—everything else shrank into insignificance.

The next morning's papers brought a sensational, but necessarily garbled account of the occurrence. The high position of the actors in the tragedy impelled a delicacy but too often disregarded by the press. The accounts differed greatly, being in fact, based upon the imagination of the reporters, rather than their knowledge. Mrs. Cheatham had only volunteered the information that the shooting was accidental as far as she knew, and that it had occurred in presence of a stranger, of whose name she was ignorant. The condition of the Senator put the possibility of interviewing him out of the question. So the papers substituted their respective air castles for the truth. One expressed its conviction that the stranger was a political desperado, who had entered the Senator's room with the view of killing him. Another believed him to have had designs upon Mr. Cheatham's purse, and only been baffled by Miss Cheatham's timely appearance. Not one of them attempted to explain the curious circumstance, that all the firing had been done by the statesman and that the would-be assassin or robber had been allowed to withdraw unmolested. The public noticed this incongruity, and the wildest speculations and most absurd reports filled the city for fully a week, then to subside and make way for new and equally startling sensations. We also will dismiss the subject, after starting, that the right eye of the Senator was totally ruined, requiring an artificial one to hide the vacancy, while the broken bone rather disfigured his face. The vision of the left eye was not seriously disturbed, but the surgeon had urged the necessity of great caution, fearing that a con-

tinued strain upon it might end in its total loss. They advised Mr. Cheatham to resign his place in Congress, hinting at the near expiration of his term, and the absolute impossibility of his return to Patropolis that winter. We need hardly add that he chafed long and angrily, but finally yielded to an inevitable necessity and actually offered his resignation. His wound chained him to his room till April, and when he reappeared in public he looked like a stricken man, exciting the sympathy of a few, and the compassion of many.

Blanche's recovery on the other hand was more rapid. It was aided by a strong and vigorous constitution, but as much, or more, by the buoyancy of her mind, caused no doubt by the consciousness of possessing the love of the man who had so strangely and completely become the center around which her thoughts, hopes and feelings revolved. The day after the accident a carriage stopped before the mansion, and cards were handed to Mrs. Cheatham bearing the names of Laura Kean and Mrs. Lucius Maxwell. As Mrs. Cheatham was well acquainted with Maxwell she accepted the visitors and met them with icy coldness, so long observed by the world as to no longer attract attention or occasion remarks. When, however, the ladies disclosed their relationship to Richard, giving his true name and hinting at his connection with the tragedy, she warmed a little, saying frankly, that she was glad to make their acquaintance, and granting cordially a daily repetition of the visits to learn the particulars of Miss Cheatham's convalescence. A week later they were even admitted into the sick room and when Blanche learned who they were, a faint color came into her face, and she looked so eagerly for the appearance of the visitors that Mrs. Cheatham became uneasy, when the usual hour came without bringing them. An intimacy soon sprang up between Blanche and Elinor, and when the former was well enough to drive out, she visited their new friends, (the Maxwell's living for the present with their relatives). At first Richard absented himself on such occasions, fearing to excite the convalescent, but when his aunt told him with an assuring smile,

that his diety could now probably endure his sight without melting away, he ventured in. Blanche was sitting on a tête-a-tête with Elinor. When she saw him a faint flush colored her face, and as he hastened towards her, she rose to meet him. "Miss Cheatham," he exclaimed, extending his hand in greeting, "I come to thank you for the generous way in which you protected me. I—"

"Miss Cheatham?" she interrupted him, a roguish smile playing around her lips, "It is, or should at least be, Cousin Blanche. Are you not aware, or do you wish to ignore that our grandfathers were brothers?"

"That is a fact, although there are persons unwilling to acknowledge our claim to such relationship."

"I am not one of them, Richard, for they tell me that you bear that name. But sit down and tell me that you are glad to see me. Gratitude, you know, is nice enough amongst strangers, but it is not your gratitude I am after, but a cousin's affection. Say, Richard, can you just like me a little?"

"Nay, Blanche, I cannot like you a little, for I love you with all my heart, with all the ardor of my nature, with every fibre of my being."

He had taken both her hands and looked with a deep yearning into her beautiful eyes.

"That's more like it," she said, the smile deepening on her face. "But dearest, you tell me nothing new. I knew you loved me from the moment you bent over me and gazed into my very soul. Nor need I tell you that I love you better than my life, have loved you from the moment I saw you."

"Yes darling, I know," he said, drawing her into his arms and holding her as if he would never let her go, "and this knowledge makes me both proud and inexpressibly happy."

"And yet you tried to run away from me, you bad boy" she said tenderly, stroking his hair from his brow. "Ah, you need not deny, for we have kindred spirits, and I anticipate your feelings before their birth. I *know* that you have warred with your affection, that you have tried to tear my image from

your heart, and to persuade yourself into the conviction that you ought to shun me like a siren."

"If you are not a siren, you surely are a witch, Blanche. It is true, I have battled with myself to tear you from my heart, because I believed that a man who, like myself, has devoted his life to his brethren, had no right to erect an idol in his heart. Besides, your father was a bitter foe to—"

She gently laid her hand upon his lips, saying: "Let the feud rest, Richard. You and I are destined to heal the breach which hatred, envy and jealousy caused. I know what you would say, and bowing my head in humility acknowledge that the fault lies with the man to whom I owe my being. Let me attone for his misdeeds, Richard."

"Say nothing more dearest. You conquered long ago."

"I know" she said with a beautiful smile. "Ah, I know my power, Richard, and promise to keep you in adamant chains, as long as there is breath in my body. Yes, your complete surrender disarms my wrath, although I ought to scold you for your little faith. I think I know pretty nearly your plan and aspirations, but you foolish boy though, that one is stronger than two, forgetting that a woman can also rise to the lofty height of enthusiastic philanthrophy, and aid the man she loves instead of checking and encumbering him."

He looked at her with proud exultation. "You must not blame me, dearest, for you are a new and sudden revelation, and such women as you are rare."

"Not rarer than such men as my beloved. I gauged you from the start, Richard, and gauged you correctly, or do you think Blanche Cheatham would have enshringed you in her heart if it had been otherwise? She is proud, if she is frank, and no low prey would have satisfied her ambition."

"I am your prey, then?" he inquired with a happy laugh, drawing her again into a fervent embrace and kissing her repeatedly.

"You are my own, dear, that is the main point" she said slyly, returning his caresses.

"But, dearest," he cried, a sudden recollection coming

into his miud, "what about your parents? Will the proud Senator consent to a marriage of his daughter to a plebian?"

A troubled look came into her face, and she said, sadly: "Richard, I have no father as to matters of such moment. He has no heart for the true welfare of his children, and I cannot allow him to have a voice in the selection of my husband."

"And if he refuses his consent."

"I can do without it. The matter lies different with my mother. She loves me dearly and a noble heart lies under the icy surface she shows to the world. She knows I love you and is ready to give me her blessing."

Thus the two went on, forgetting the outer world, forgetting time and circumstances, until at last a gentle knock at the door recalled them to their senses. It was Elinor peeping through the door; kind Elinor, who had wisely vanished, when she saw the vortex approaching, knowing that it is awkward for a third party to be engulfed. She now asked for the privilege of being the first to offer her congratulations, intimating that there were other parties desirous of imitating her example. Instead of replying, Blanche flew into her arms and smothered with kisses the warm wishes for her happiness. Then Maxwell stuck his head through the door, asking slyly whether it was his turn next, but receiving the stern rebuke that ladies always come first. So Mrs. Maxwell handed the happy girl over to Mrs. Keau, who caressed her with truly motherly affection, while Maxwell had to content himself with shaking first Richard's and then Blanche's hand, declaring that he was mighty glad to see this uncompromising benedict put into the matrimonial yoke. Then the servant announced dinner to be ready, and Elinor triumphantly carried off her friend, disregarding all her protestations, that she must go, as mamma would be uneasy as to her protracted absence. Happy youth! Thrice happy because they have found mates whose hearts beat in unison, and whose character warrants the conviction, that their affection will not die like the fire fed by straw, a fire marked by the intensity of its heat, but also by the shortness of its duration.

CHAPTER XX.

AURORA, THE HERALD OF DAY.

Richard foresaw that the occurrence at the Cheatham mansion would make an attempt of preserving his incognito much longer abortive. He, for whom it had been chiefly assumed, had seen behind the curtain. True, the re-adoption of his real name would deprive him of that nimbus, which the poverty of the tinker had woven around his head, but the character of our friend had been too firmly established by this time to be shaken by such a revelation, to say nothing of the fact that his treasures were fast taking wings, and promised an early disappearance. A constant drainage without a new influx must exhaust any purse, and such a drainage had been not only steady but on a large scale. The purchase or building of headquarters, and the manufactory of rifles had taken millions, reducing his fund from eighteen millions to six. Fortunately the demand for money in that direction had ceased, as Richard felt sure, that new demands would spring up at the hour of crisis, and was determined to use the strictest economy on that account. Before reassuming the name of Woods, he drew all his money from the banks, and then redeposited it in his real name. He was too well aware of the finesse of these financeers, and therefore used all precaution in his power to foil an attempt to cripple him by crippling his resources. The bank officials looked blank, when he thus shed his name as the butterfly its chrysalis, but as Richard had said on a former occasion, wealth justifies as mere freaks and caprices many a thing which the world would find impardonable in a poor devil. So these officers merely smiled and bowed to Mr. Wood as radically as they had bowed to Mr. Velder. Our friend now saw the wisdom of drawing the advance payments for his telephone, heavy though the discount had been, for he heard at more than one place the words of surprise couple with the declaration that they would have tested the legality of his title to the patent under the

circumstances. Spring approached and passed, and Congress adjourned without the introduction of the military bill.

This was partly due to Cheatham's mishap, but partly also to the strong protest of a small but powerful branch of the press, The Sentinel, which had grown from a little penny paper into one of the largest and most influential journals of the land, had denounced the scheme in severe terms. It had said:

"This bill is not only nefarious, but absolutely suicidal. Its author claims that we can no longer trust the militia, that is, the strength and sinew of the land, to maintain order. If this be really true; if the flower of the country is ready to betray its vital interests, then let us shut up shop, and emigrate to the Esquimaux or to the savages of Africa. But it is *not* true. These militia men are the very strength and support of our free institutions. Would you entrust their keeping to capital? You might as well entrust the care of the sheep fold to the wolves or that of the garden to the goats. No, it is the maintenance of a large and standing army, which is inimical and ruinous to free institutions. A hundred thousand men! Senator Cheatham must be either demented or bent upon mischief. Such an army wants employment, and ambitious men will take care to give it work. A Napolean, a Cæsar, is always dangerous, but put them at the head of mercenary legions, and you give them both the opportunity and power to carry out the schemes of their ambitious and mischievous brain. Mercenary; that is the proper term. So antagonistic is the maintenance of a standing army to our free institutions that you can only get the refuse of this and other countries to enlist in its ranks. A hundred thousand men! Better say a hundred thousand libertines let loose upon a defenseless people.

Richard breathed more freely when Congress adjourned sine die. Before it would assemble again the first streaks of a new day would color the sky.

At the break of spring Bertha confided to the ladies of the front mansion the anticipated news that she had accepted

the General's wooing, and that the first day of April had been set for the nuptials. She blushed very prettily at this announcement, causing Elinor to declare with a warm embrace of her young friend that she was sweet and pretty enough for a prince. The General was now a frequent visitor to the home of her friends, thus gaining not only a deeper insight, but a more perfect appreciation of Richard's character as well as teachings. At first he had shared Maxwell's scruples, but long before the arrival of his wedding day, he had embraced the same views, though perhaps in a milder form. Nor had Maxwell stayed behind, although the latter declared on more than one occasion that both he and Runwell had not been converted by the depth of Richard's arguments, but by the wiles of two sirens, at which the two ladies bristled up so indignantly that the defamer had to beat a hasty retreat. Well, the wedding went off without any mishap, to the great satisfaction of the friends of the contracting parties, but to no one's greater joy and pride than the old Professor's, who declared that his niece's happiness made him young once more, and that he expected to dance at the wedding of his prospective grand children.

A few weeks later Richard received a short note from the Del Polino Club House, informing him that a sick person living there wished to see him. Our friend wondered a little, but his kindness of heart kept him from asking questions. An hour after the reception of the missive he ascended the stairway to the second floor, and inquired for Antoinette, as she had penned and signed the note. She appeared at once, looking much older and rather sad.

"Ah, mille mercis, one thousand thanks, Monsieur," she said with that pomposity so natural to many of her people. "Vous venez voir, Monsieur Cyre. Le pauvre garçon! Ah, he vill hardly live to see the night."

"What! You do not mean to insinuate that Cyrus Cheatham is here and dying?"

"Mais oui, Monsieur, I mean that very thing."

"And don't his people know? Haven't you informed them?"

"Oui, Monsieur, his mothaire and his sistaire are vid him."

"And his father?"

"Refuses to see him. Ah, Monsieur le senateur is one bad man."

"Well, lead me to him."

She started, taking the elevator and leading him to No. 27 in the very room which had been the scene of one of Cyrus' rascalities. When he entered, he found both Mrs. Cheatham and Blanche there, both with tear stained eyes, but calmer than Richard had anticipated. Little did he know of the heart aches which this dying rouge had caused both his mother and sister, killing inch by inch the affection they had once born him. True, a mother's heart never loses its affection for her offspring, but it can be and often *is* tinged with gloom and despair. It was probably more the unexpected return and prospective death of this prodigal son, than anything else which now caused their tears to flow.

When Richard stepped to the bed, the patient's face showed signs of recognition. He beckoned him to stoop down then said: "V. Woods, where is Elinor?"

"Why do you ask?"

"I want to ask her forgiveness, and redress the wrong done her as far as lies in my power."

"Elinor is happily married."

"And is really happy?"

"Undoubtedly."

"And you think it would revive old trouble, to bring her here?"

"I do not know, but fear it might."

"Then do not bring her. I would like to ask her pardon but not at the expense of her peace. Will you tell her some day that the memory of the deep injury to her is now the bitterest drop in my cup? Oh! I would give all the world, if by doing so, I could blot out this spot."

"I will tell her, Cheatham, indeed I will. In fact, if her presence will soothe and comfort you, I'll bring her here."

The dying man shook his head. "Her peace before mine," he whispered. "You say she is happy; that is enough. Say Woods, I wronged you, too. Will you forgive me and shake hands?"

"I will, with all my heart, old fellow," Richard cried, taking the wasted hand lying on the bed and giving it a gentle pressure. Then turning to Blanche, he asked: "Did you tell him?"

"Not yet, we have only been here a few minutes. Tell him yourself. He may be pleased."

Richard again turned to the patient, whose hand still rested in his.

"Cheatham," he said gently, almost tenderly, "your sister Blanche has promised to be my wife. Tell me that her choice meets with your approbation."

Cheatham's face lit up. "Is it true?" he asked, turning to his sister. When she nodded, he said, with a sigh of relief: "I am glad, so glad. Blanche, he is good and pure and you—you will repay him for the injury your brother has done to him and his?"

"I will, Cy, I will, to the best of my ability."

"Thank you. Can't you make a little more light? I want to see you all once more, before I leave you. Mother—sister—farewell!"

He closed his eyes, and a few minutes later breathed his last. We will not molest the reader with his funeral, and have, indeed, only drawn this death scene to show you how the chain which bound Senator Cheatham to life and its enjoyments snapped link by link until he remained alone, a blasted oak, a gilded oak, it is true, but only a blasted one after all.

When Blanche informed her father of her betrothal to Richard Woods, he said, sneeringly: "Thanks for the news. Has the wedding day been set?"

"It has not. We are not in a hurry and wish to consult your wishes and mother's."

"That *was* considerate. I expected that you had it all cut and dried, and were about to hand me an invitation to the wedding."

"You are sarcastic father, and unjustly so. I am no child and consider it my right to consult my own inclination in such an important matter. I have mother's sanction, and trust that you also will not oppose my wishes."

"A timely wish. I wonder that you did not delay its utterance until after the wedding."

"Father your consent would please me, but your refusal would not change my resolution."

"So you disregard my authority?"

"If it conflicts with reason and equity, yes. My past experience has taught me to be distrustful to your measures for my welfare."

"Enough," cried the irate man, "I have heard as much impudence as I can bear, and now tell you once for all, if you marry this demagogue, this enemy of mine, I'll expel you from my house, and cut you off with a shilling. Go?"

She rose calmly to leave the room. She felt deeply and bitterly that she did no longer respect and love her father. She regretted that his unfairness and tyranny compelled her to disregard his wishes in so vital a matter, but while she was determined to follow the dictates of her heart and conscience, she was pained at this necessity. She sought her mother and communicated to her the scene we have just reported. Mrs. Cheatham's face became even paler than usual, and she moaned deeply as she drew her child into her embrace.

"I have said all on this subject I have to say, dear" she said. "What could I add to the terrible words you were compelled to read? If you decide to leave your paternal roof you will take my blessing on your way. I cannot leave, Blanche, my chains are too well forged, and it surpasses my strength to break them, so I shall stay at my post until a merciful death releases me? With you it is different. You are young, have

life before you, and above all the affection of a noble man. I do not say 'go!' for I do not wish to drive you off, and my heart will bleed when you go, if it really contains enough vitality for such an effusion, but if you go, you will take with you my best wishes for your happiness." Blanche returned her carresses, then left the room. Alas, she had learned to understand and commiserate her wretched mother. That same afternoon she met Richard and informed him of her father's threats and her determination to disregard it.

"I have my grandmother's jewels," she said, "their sale will yield a sum sufficient for my humble wants."

"You are the only jewel I care about," he cried. "Leave all his wealth behind and then come. The sooner you bless me with your presence, the better."

"I have thought it would be well to come to you if he drives me off, and in such a case—"

"We shall tie the knot which make us one for life."

"Be it to-morrow. It can never come too soon for me."

And it came sooner than they both anticipated. The Senator had been pondering upon what he considered and openly denounced as his daughter's imprudence. He complained to himself that he had spoiled her, had humored her every wish. He blamed this foolish indulgence for her present independence and stubborn opposition to his orders as well as his wishes.

"I must change my tactics" he grumbled to himself, and ringing the bell, ordered the servant to inform Miss Cheatham that he desired her presence in his room. This was on the eve of the day which witnessed the conversation recorded. The servant returned, telling him that Miss Blanche was absent and would probably not return before nine or ten. The Senator's brow darkened. "I'll wager anything she is with the accused fellow" he growled when the servant had retired. "Well, this must be settled at once. If she yields, all right; if not, I'll drive her from my house and my heart at the same time."

So it occurred that Blanche made her appearance at the

house of our friends the very next morning. She found them assembled in the sitting room discussing some domestic matters concerning chiefly Maxwell and Elinor. Richard sprang up to meet and greet the girl, but discovered something so unusual in her mien, that he asked abruptly. "Well little one, what is it. Can I do anything particular for you?"

"Yes Richard," she replied simply and unaffectedly.

"You can give me a place in your house as well as in your heart, for my father has driven me off."

"The—"

She laid her fingers on his lips, saying, "hush, forget him, as I shall forget him."

They all crowded around her now, and everyone suggested a plan. Maxwell listened a moment to the different suggestions, then said: "I know what we can do, must do, and will do. George, hand me my hat, my boy. Thank you, thank you. Now friends you stay here until I shall be back, I wont be gone long."

"What are you going to do Lucius? You must tell me dear."

"Why, can't you guess? I am going for the twine that makes two, one, and for the sailor that does the splicing."

"That's a good boy," Elinor cried gleefully. "Isn't he clever though? Well, why don't you go? Don't you see we are in a hurry?"

"Hurry or no hurry. I am going to steal a kiss first. You had better hold still, for if you struggle, you keep me back. So that's a good girl."

When he had gone Mrs. Kean said: "Now, children, we must make some preparations to discharge our duties to these dear ones with propriety. Elinor, will you please run and tell Marie to dust the parlor? Now Blanche, dear, let me have a look at you. You look awful plain in this muslin dress. Won't you put on one of Elinor's silk ones. She has that white satin you know, and I think it would just fit you."

"No, aunty, dear, leave her in her muslin. The plainer she is dressed, the more conspicious her loveliness will be."

"There is taffy for you, my dear. Well, have it your own way. But as far as you are concerned, sir, I'll exercise my authority until this dear creature takes the reins in hand. You go instanter—isn't that what the judges say when they want to impress the culprit?—and put on a suit of black broadcloth. There is a good boy. Hurry, though, for I wager that fellow Maxwell will gobble the first preacher he can lay hands on."

Half an hour later Richard reappeared and looked so stately and handsome in his black suit that a feeling of pride and great joy thrilled the heart of Blanche. A little later Maxwell stepped in the room, saying: "Well, I caught a reverend. He is in the parlor, so get your faces into the proper solemnity, and then come on."

Taking Richard a little aside, he added: "Dick, he isn't of the true orthodox sort, but a liberal. I was in a hurry, you know, and had to take what I could find."

Blanche had crept mischievously behind them, and overheard his words.

"Don't you know, that whispering is impolite?" she asked archly. "For a punishment I ought to send you off for the genuine article, but I will be magnanimous and confess, that a liberal suits me just as well. In fact, I would have been satisfied with a justice."

Maxwell raised his hands in pretended horror. "But the solemnity of the hour and ceremony," he exclaimed, "lies in our hearts, not in the dress we wear, nor the mouth which unites us."

"Right, my darling," cried Richard, kissing her with fervor, while Maxwell said with resignation: "Well matched. A radical agitator and a radical heretic. Well, it can't be helped, I suppose, and as the gentleman in the parlor is waiting, we had better join him. Elinor, come dear, let us show them the way."

So they all went into the room where the minister, an elderly man with an intelligent face, tied the knot which joined their hands and lives, the bond of their hearts and souls

having been contracted long since. There were warm congratulations, of course, and kissing all around. Then dinner was announced, and a very happy company sat down to enjoy it.

"Now, my friends," said Maxwell in the course of conversation, the question arises: "Where shall we put this couple? Elinor and I have the best rooms, and are going to keep them, so—"

"Listen to the man," Elinor exclaimed. "There is the true aristocrat for you; selfish to the core."

"Madam, I have the floor, if you please," said her husband gravely. "If you ask this lucky groom here, he will tell you that our aristocracy is the main prop of our country and its free institutions, and that selfishness or egotism, as the people in the West call it, is a necessary and conservative virtue. Having thus proved the utter groundlessness of your objection, I proceed. The good rooms of the mansion being thus engaged, by the right priority, only the attic and the office in the basement remain. The former is occupied by two maidens belonging to Richard's patrons, a circumstance barring, of course, the very idea of dislodging them. We are therefore restricted to the office, and will be considered prudent in the eyes of all well-meaning people for selecting it. It would be different, if there were any danger of hurting the present incumbent's feelings, but as he is nothing but numbers and therefore incapable of emotions, the last possible objection falls to the ground."

This sally was greeted with applause and laughter; but when it had subsided, Richard exclaimed: "I have an amendment to offer. You all know, that the fall elections are near at hand, and that we propose to strike on that occasion the first blow at the Moloch of the day. How would it do, then, for this little girl and me to take a tour over the land, and fire the hearts of our friends?"

"It would never do," cried Maxwell with comical consternation. "If you take this little girl along, the judges of election will afterwards accuse you of using undue influences,

and, in my humble opinion, they would not be so very far from the mark, either."

Thus they chatted and laughed, until Marie came into the room, announcing that Mrs. Cheatham was in the parlor, and wished to see them. Blanche flew into her mother's arms and cried: "Oh, mother, why did you refuse to sanction our marriage by your presence?"

Mrs. Cheatham smiled. "Is not my approval all the sanction you need? I come to tell you that I have packed your clothes and sent them by John. And here are the jewels of my mother; they are yours by legacy, you know."

"But, Mrs. Cheatham," now began Richard, who had followed his wife. "Won't you call me mother, Richard?" Mrs. Cheatham inquired with a yearning look. "You know I lost one son, so you owe me another, do you not?"

"You make me proud and happy by granting me this privilege," Richard cried, taking and reverently kissing the lady's hands. "But, as to these jewels, mother, I would rather—"

"My son," she interrupted him. "Those jewels belong to Blanche, and we have no right, if we had the wish, to keep them, so say nothing more about it, And now, sit down and tell me what you propose to do. I cannot invite you to my house, you know, but no power on earth shall prevent me from seeing you in yours."

"We propose to travel a while, mother."

"Ah? Well, I wish you abundant bliss and happiness, and the company of all good spirits to guard you from harm."

"When do you propose to leave?"

"Probably to-morrow."

"Then I may as well say good bye, now, as Mr. Cheatham is not well and needs my attention." She embraced and kissed both Blanche and Richard, saying to the latter: "Be good to her, Richard, she deserves it, and let the husband make her forget that she lost a father."

A firm pressure of the hand was all the answer he gave,

all in fact, that was needed. With a final nod she glided quietly from the room, while her children gazed sadly after her, the wreck of conventionalities and the worship of mammon."

The next morning saw the young couple off. Their journey was really a triumphal procession, not on account of its pomp and pageantry, but on account of the grateful homage which thousands of hearts brought to the virtues of the groom, and the gentleness, kindness and beauty of the bride. In Lakeopolis they were received with open arms by the Duncans. There they rested a while, meeting at the same time the leaders of the brotherhood in conclave, Blanche attending and taking as deep an interest in the movement as her husband. When he asked how the prospects of a victory at the polls looked in the city, the president smiled significantly, saying: "It will be a clean sweep, Mr. Woods."

The same reply was given at other places, and when the young couple returned to Plutopolis, late in October, Richard was not hopeful, but confident.

"The beauty of the thing is, that the old parties have no suspicion of the Waterloo which awaits them. You know, Maxwell, that we have studiously avoided to dabble in politics thus far, and while the wire pullers know our numerical strength, they have no idea that the brotherhood is ready to desert from their ranks in a body."

"Have no nominations been made?"

"In every instance."

"And have they not leaked out? Such a secrecy is almost incredible."

"Well, they may have leaked out, they probably have, but they have been treated like so many idle rumors, receiving no credence whatever."

"And have all the members been duly posted?"

"Certainly. The Sentinel has been busy for weeks printing tickets and sending them to the various lodges."

"Isn't that a rather complicated movement? Would not the local printers have answered as well?"

"We did patronize local printers who are members, and can therefore be trusted."

"And when will the election come off?"

"Why, don't you know? Next Tuesday, the first one in November."

"To tell the truth, Richard, I never voted in my life."

"A pardonable negligence under the present system, but a criminal negligence after the break of a new and glorious era."

"Well, I hope you will not be disappointed. A new constitution does not make all at once a perfect set of men."

"Of course it don't, but it paves the way to such a state."

"You are too sanguine. There never will be perfection."

"Of course there will not. Who would wish to live, if there were? Perfection means stagnation. No, Maxwell, my watchword is '*progress*,' and to it I shall adhere while I have life."

At last the momentous day broke. Nothing distinguished it from other days. Nothing showed that the weal or woe of many millions depended upon the issue of the experiment to be tried in its confines. It was a sunny day, a day of Indian summer, so mild, so genial, and yet so sad on account of the fall of leaves, the decay of flowers and the approach of that icy tyrant, winter. Richard and Maxwell voted early and then proceeded to National Hall, where arrangements for the reception of telegraphic news had been perfected. The leaders of the Plutopolis lodges assembled there, but only they, for the masses were too deeply stirred for the quiet, ordinary routine of life. They swarmed in and out like so many bees, only carrying the honey out instead of in, viz: the honey of the news, for it was all honey, without even one drop of wormwood.

Twenty-five of the fifty States of the Union elected Governors that day, all of them Judges, members of Congress and of the State Legislatures and other officials. At noon the

wires began to click, at first merely intimating probabilites, then strong probabilities, the prospect of a glorious victory improving with every telegram. At seven in the evening the definite results began to be announced. Every Governor had been elected by the brotherhood. They had made a clean sweep of all the Legislators, members of Congress and officials. It was not only a waterloo for the old parties, it was a complete annihilation. Not even a groan of the dying was heard, in fact a deep, an almost painful silence hung over the city, over the whole land. The result took the breath of even the victors, choking the cheers which rose in their throats. And the others? They were awe struck. What could it all mean? Where were those stalwart followers that had in former days carried the standard so proudly to victory? Whence came those legions that, with one blow, without apparent effort annihilated associations once so strong, once so formidable and so feared? Yes, what could it all mean? Did it mean anything, and, if it did, was this *something* bound to make itself felt in future days? Many a sorehead asked himself that question as he retired that night, not to sleep, but to roll restlessly upon his couch, repeating again and again: "What does it mean? What can it mean?"

On the other hand, there were millions, that night, who lay down joyfully, their breasts expanding with a proud consciousness of the first successful blow struck in the name of liberty, of equity, of justice and brotherhood, struck at the brazen limbs of the Colossus which had hitherto held the world in bondage, but which now shook and trembled under this first vigorous blow.

Richard and his friend returned late that night; but when the former met Blanche, who looked unexpectedly at him, he drew her into his arms and said: "Blanche dear, the time is near at hand, when you also will be entitled to cast your vote for liberty and progress."

CHAPTER XXI.

A CONSPIRACY.

The next morning Richard took up the papers with considerable curiosity, but if he had expected to find commentaries on yesterday's battle he was disappointed. The result was given in dry words and numbers, but even the most conservative paper abstained from any remarks. It was evident that the wire pullers and their organs had not revived from a blow so terrible and telling as to make the renewal of the struggle apparently hopeless. The Sentinel was the only journal which discussed the election and its probable tendencies. To Richard its remarks were nothing new, as he had inspired, if not written them. The Sentinel said: "Veni, vidi, vici. With Cæsar we have come, seen, and conquered. We have not only defeated our adversaries, we have wiped them out. We need not crow over our victory, and do not crow, for it is only the weak party which shouts over an unexpected victory. Our victory was certain before we went into battle, for our party now numbers ten million voters, that is, two-thirds of those in the Union. We have selected twenty-five governors, or all in the field. We have elected every member of the lower house of Congress, that was to be voted on. We have elected every member of State Legislators on the ticket, to say nothing of the judges and other officials. If we are equally successful next fall, we shall control the lower House of Congress, one-third of the members of the Senate, and every State Legislature in the country. We shall fill every governatorial seat, and send members of our brotherhood to all judicial benches of the country, excepting the supreme judges whose tenure of office has not expired by that time. Let us pause, friends, to look at the stupenduous significance of this prospect. Let us consider both the possibilities and the duties which it involves. We shall have the sole and undisputed control of Occidentia, before four more years have passed. In other words, we shall meet in the nearest future an awful responsibility, doubly awful, because we are inaugurating a new state

of affairs, and will have to prove to a wondering world both the feasibility of our reforms, and also their stability. The result cannot be dubious, if we are but true to ourselves, our principles and our promises. Do not forget, friends, that we now stand upon our good behavior, that we are on trial, and that the slightest error on our part will be magnified by our foes, and used to our detriment. Let, therefore, every member of the brotherhood resolve himself into a committee, to watch both his private and public character, to see that he controls his passions and abstains from any interference with the rights of others, showing beyond doubt and cavil, that the yeomen of the Nation can be, and are indeed the unshakable support and safeguard of free institutions."

"That's it," said Richard, handing the paper to Maxwell. "The danger lies now, not without, but within. If our boys do not observe the strictest order; if they violate in one way or another the rights of their neighbors, there will be a big outcry, and the sins of the individual will be charged to the order."

From these remarks we are entitled to judge that our friend did not anticipate any more trouble from the defeated enemy, thinking, probably, that this slaughter had broken their backbone. We shall soon see how right or wrong he was.

Mrs. Cheatham paid her children as many visits as she could without neglecting her home duties, or provoking any domestic disturbances. She had learned to love and honor Richard, and to admire the total unselfishness with which he advocated the rights of the people. She had, indeed, become a convert to his views, her experience having probably shown her the vanity and hollowness of riches. About a week after the election she appeared in the house of our friends, and said to Richard: "My son, can I see you in private?"

"Certainly," he responed, rising and making mien to leave the room.

"May I come, mamma?" Blanche cried playfully.

"Of course," she replied and the trio left the sitting room

for the parlor. When they were seated, Mrs. Cheatham said: "Richard, I have discovered things which I feel it my duty to communicate to you. You know the affairs of our family too well, to require any explanation of my motives, so I will merely say that I do not make these disclosures to hurt anybody, but to save your friends from danger and great harm."

"You make me both curious and anxious, mother. Do you apply the term friends to my home circle?"

"No, my son, to your clients at large. It is useless to enter into details, so let me simply say, that I found a note in the grate of the library, which contained the information that a body of men would soon visit the Senator, to confer with him on the best and most expedient mode of checking the alarming inroads of the people, or as the paper called it, 'mob' upon the upper classes."

"Ah! I wonder, Mr. Cheatham did not take the precaution to destroy this paper."

"You must remember, Richard, that his eyesight has been greatly impaired. He did make the attempt to destroy the paper, for it was partly burned, creating probably the impression of its entire destruction. Here is the note:"

Richard took the paper with much curiosity, and read as follows:

LAKEOPOLIS, Nov. 5th, 18—.

Dear Sir:—Your note reached me yesterday. I am glad to tell you that we have anticipated the necessity of such a step as you suggest, and resolved upon an early meeting in Plutopolis, to discuss measures for the suppression of the mob, and its devices. Your invitation simplifies the measure, and after due consultation with my friends, we have determined to meet at your house on Nov. the 10th, at preeisely 9 p. m.

The committee consists, besides you and myself, of—we omit the names as irrelevant to the issue. Please arrange matters with becoming secrecy, as our purposes must not become public.

Yours in haste, CONRAD GRASPMAN.

"This is important news, indeed, mother," Richard said gravely, "but it is of little use if we cannot get a clue to their machinations. I feel confident that they will leave no stone unturned to accomplish our ruin, and would give a year of my life to ferret out their plans."

Mrs. Cheatham listened attentively, and then mused a while.

"I wish I could help you, Richard," she said at last, hesitatingly. "I detest eaves dropping, but in cases of emergencies and public danger, one must not be too delicate. I know a place where I could overhear the deliberations of the conspirators, but my memory is treacherous, and I fear I would lose much of their conversation. If I understood shorthand--"

Richard started, "Mother," he said eagerly, "did you ever see one of my phonographs?"

"Yes, Richard, we have more than once amused ourselves with its magical powers."

"Then, could you not smuggle one of them into the room?"

"I might," she said thoughtfully; "but I have no way of starting it in season."

"I have, mother. I provided one or two with works, which can be wound and made to start the machine at any given time."

"That will do, I think. Give me your phonograph, Richard, and I will manage the rest. If they plotted against me, I would not stir a finger, for death, my son, is not hard to bear for one bruised and fettered as I am. But the people. Nay, I will baffle them in spite of their millions. Ah, it is some grim satisfaction to play Nemesis, my son."

For a moment a fierce fire flashed from her eyes, then she relapsed into her apathy, taking the box he handed her and departing with the promise to do her best.

The days slipped by, one after another, and when the morning of the eleventh set in, Richard started at every noise, and sprang to his feet at every ring of the bell, expecting every moment to see or hear from Mrs. Cheatham. However,

the morning passed off without bringing any sign of her, and when the shades of evening began to settle over the city without even a token from her, his heart sank within him, and he began to fear that her risky mission had failed, endangering perhaps her life. He did not express these fears to Blanche, but was determined to assure himself of Mrs. Cheatham's well-being if the next morning brought no news from her. It did, though. At about ten o'clock she appeared in the house, carrying with her, and delivering with a sigh of relief, the machine to Richard.

"I could not come yesterday," she said, sinking into a chair. The thing worked all right, but I could not find an opportunity to take the phonograph from its hiding place, as the excitement of the previous night had shattered his"—she generally spoke of the Senator that way—"nerves, and he remained at home all day. So I had to steal into his study in the dead of night, you see."

"How can I ever prove my gratitude, mother?"

She made a deprecating gesture, then said: "You owe me nothing, Richard. It is not for you, I did this but for mankind. My life has been such a blank, so useless, that the thought of helping the people ever so little, has quite a charm for me."

"You raised this little girl, mother,. That was enough to ennoble your life."

"Enoble?" she cried with inexpressible bitterness. "How can that be noble which was dragged through filth and mire? But, farewell, dear children, I must go."

"Will you not stay to hear the result of your venture?"

"No, Richard, I must go, you can tell me some other time."

When she had left them, Richard reverted the machine, slackened its motion sufficiently to copy its delivery and then prepared to note it down.

It was a long and weary task, and his fingers threatened to cease their cunning, but on he wrote, both his and Blanche's

attention growing every minute, until they had become the prey of feverish excitement.

The contents are too long for reproduction at this place. To curtail, *i. e.*, to mutilate them, would deprive them of their interests, so we prefer to copy a leader of the following issue of the *Sentinel*, headed: "A Startling Revelation," and having, indeed, the effect of startling and arousing the entire Nation to its nethermost depth. And this is what the leader said:

"We are in possession of news to-day, news so startling, so highly improbable and increditable, that we would not dare to publish it, were we not in condition to prove every item in the most irrefutable and substantial manner. We give to-day only the facts, but are in possession of the names as well. If this publication of the nefarious scheme concocted does not drive the fiendish perpetrators into their dens, and induce them to abandon a conspiracy aiming at the ruin of hundreds of thousands of the families of this country, we shall give them also. We repeat, that we are in possession of the very words in which these conspirators expressed their wicked intentions, and are prepared to give not only their names, but prove out of their very mouths the truth and perfect correctness of our accusations.

And this is what we have to say:

On the evening of the tenth of November there met, in the mansion of one of the millionaires of Palace street, a conclave of twelve men, representatives of the great industries of Occidentia, not of their own accord, but as a committee sent by these industries to deliberate, not upon their own welfare and the welfare of the men they represent, but upon the ruin and enslavement of the working classes of this country. Mind what we say, for, what we say, we mean, and what we mean can prove to the satisfaction of the most sceptical. And how was this ruin to be accomplished? Listen: On pretense of hard times, a bad market and a stringency of money, these great industries were to be closed, one after another, and to be kept closed until our workingmen would be subdued by

starvation; until the wailings of their wives and babes would force them to surrender their manhood, bow their necks under the yoke and receive the lashes due them for their impudent claim of being human beings, possessed of rights that should be respected by their masters. The great rolling mills of Smokopolis were to open the dance. Then the gigantic industries of Plutopolis, Fratropolis, Lakopolis and other cities were to follow suit, each wheeling into line and to remain closed until starvation had done its work.

We used the past tense on purpose, for we think, we hope, yea trust, that, when these lines meet the eyes of the guilty parties, they will shrink in horror at the fearful thing they contemplated. If we err; if they are shameless enough to push their nefarious scheme in spite of the wonderment of an indignant public, very well; we shall then give the names which we now charitably withhold, and brand with everlasting shame, individuals, so dead to the nobler promptings of nature, as to plan, in cold blood, of the ruin of hundreds of thousands of their fellow beings, who have committed no other crime than that of asserting their inborn rights.

These men are conspirators. Our courts know this fact, but it would be merely a farce to ask them to punish these criminals to the full extent of the law. If they were poor, it would be a different thing; but being rich and mighty, the arm of the law is too short to reach them.

In conclusion we utter in kindness and without the shadow of a menace, the word *"beware!"* Our yeoman are generous and long suffering to a fault, but human patience has its limits. The workingmen of the country pride themselves upon being law abiding citizens, and respecters of the rights of others; but they are, after all, but human, and when they are driven to the wall, and cannot recede further, when their dear ones are crying for bread which they cannot give them then, ye rich men of the land, they might forget that it is not lawful to strike an ingenious tormentor, or to take things which legally do not belong to them. We shall continue to do our duty, holding up the standard of moderation and toleration to the

bitter end, but we shall also continue to teach to our brethren their natural and inborn rights, and if in the hour of the crisis, the dam breaks, and sweeps away the heartless oppressor, we shall pity him, but not mourn for him."

As we have stated before, the effect of this article was deep and lasting. There were no outcries of indignation, no threats, no imprecations, but the emotion was that of deep waters when stirred to their depths. Only shallow, babbling brooks fume and fret, and when you notice a mighty upheaving, grounds well reaching from one shore to another, you may judge that the water is deep, and that it has been stirred to the bottom. There were no further condemnatory articles in the Sentinel; there were no indignation meetings, no waiting or protesting or imploring committees to the heads of industries, but these heads felt the silent remonstrance perhaps more keenly on account of its very silence, and when New Years came, the time set for the inauguration of the starvation policy, the rolling mills and machine shops remained open, and the industries of the country went their wonted way, fostered and strengthened by the plentiful harvest of the year, and the peaceful attitude of the entire civilized world.

Spring set in, and passed away. Summer followed in its wake, and autumn in that of Summer. Once more the elections were close at hand and this time everything that money and power and influence could accomplish, had been done. Was it successful? Had the theory that the poor man does not appreciate his franchise, and is ready to sell it for a drink, proved correct? Let us see. Let us once more accompany our friends to the polls and listen in the evening to the "tick," "tick" of the mighty fluid shaping now our industries and destined to shape it much more completely in future generations. What do these ticks tell? That the old bosses have forced the masses back to their allegiance? That the rich and mighty have voted like a unit and saved the country, which, in their dictionary means themselves? Not much, for listen: "The other twenty-five states have elected National Governors. Their legislators are solid phalanxes of nationalists. The

Lower House of Congress bears the same impress, and when the legislators have elected the Senators that go out, even this senate is the stronghold of conservatism, the refuge of feudalistic principles will be one third nationalists with the dead certainty of becoming two thirds in two more, and totally so in four more years. This time there is no apathy on the part of the people. They have felt their power and tasted their importance, and their joy is therefore more noisy, though still orderly. Only here and there outbreaks occurred, and these were quelled by the Brotherhood. The worst was in Plutopolis, where thousands of ignorant people assembled in dangerous quantities. They gathered in their own wards, and taking heart from numbers and whiskey, prepared to invade the quarters of the wealthy. The authorities were powerless, so they accepted the support of the batallions, so thoroughly drilled by our friends. Silently, but resolutely they march into the rebellious ward, first warning, then charging the rioters. True, these too, are armed, but their aimless shots do little harm, and when the compact bodies of Nationalist yeomen strike their loose and promiscuous masses, the latter fly before them, as the chaff before the wind. They gather behind them, attacking in the rear with the fury of wild cats, and the instinct of cowards; but the compact body wheels and again the deluded foes flee, this time to disperse and to hide, to escape the arm of law and order which has regained its strength, and now seizes a few leaders to strike terror into those who led.

The next day everything was quiet, and with new assurance did Richard look upon the problem of the possibility of a self control of the masses, when no longer restrained by the club of the policeman or the musket of the soldier.

CHAPTER XXII.

THE GREAT STRIKE.

Richard and the other chiefs of the Brotherhood now met in almost daily council. It was time to inaugurate some measure tending towards that great change, not to say revolution, likely to occur in a few years. They knew it would be idle to expect any voluntary concessions on the part of capital; so they would have to be demanded, and demanded gradually, not to startle it and cause it to act like the stubborn mule which balks, if you put too heavy a load upon the cart. The Brotherhood designed to equalize labor and shorten its hours; so it was determined to demand from all employers a shortening of the daily period of labor to eight hours.

This demand was to be made by a few trades first and on a certain morning was actually made by the iron workers of the country. The employers demanded twenty-four hours time for deliberation, and when they had expired, peremptorily refused to accede to the demand, alleging that such a concession would irretrievably ruin them. It was evident that something was brewing, and when Richard learned of this decision he hastily convened his confederates. When they had assembled he addressed them, saying in brief: "Brethren:— The crisis has come, and it behooves us to meet it like men. They would not have given this unqualified refusal, if they had not met in council, and determined upon uniform action. The ancients said 'Him whom the Gods wish to destroy, they first make mad.' These men are mad. They cannot read the signs of the times, and deserve neither pity nor consideration. They are simply mad, but, in their madness, will stroke furiously and desperately. Like wise men we must look out for these blows and prepare to meet them. A universal strike will be inevitable, and it is fortunate that we are prepared for it. Our graneries are full. Our stores are ample, and we can stand the strain, severe though it be. Secretary, wire to all head centers to prepare for the worst, and wait for the word

go. I wonder what these foolish people will do next, for depend upon it, now that they have turned upon us, they will not stop at half measures."

His words were truly prophetic, for at this very moment a constable appeared at the door, drawing forth a paper from which he read a list of names, adding: "Gentleman, I have orders to summon you before Judge Muddle of the District Court of Plutopolis, to answer to the charge of conspiracy."

They looked at one another, then at Richard, who only smiled, saying merely, "I told you so."

Then turning to the constable, he added: "Then we are under arrest, sir?"

"That's what's the matter. I am charged to take you before his Honor, where you can give bail, I reckon."

"All right, law is law, and order, order. Come gentlemen, let us visit the Honorable Muddle, and see upon what he bases his charge."

The conclave did not seem to be greatly depressed by this unexpected maneuvre of the enemy, for they laughed as they took their hats, and good naturedly followed the constable who, from his sheepish looks appeared more like their prisoner than their custodian. A street car took them to the court house where they had to wait awhile until the case before his Honor was finished. Fifteen minutes later they stood before the judge, who eyed them rather sternly, and then proceeded to enlighten them as to the nature of the charge preferred against them. In closing he said: "The offense of which you are accused is a serious one, punishable with imprisonment of no less than two, and no more than five years. I will have to make your bail commensurate with the gravity of the charge. I suppose you desire and are prepared to give bail?"

"Of course" Richard replied with a profound bow; "how much will it be judge?"

"Five thousand dollars in each case."

"There are twelve of us. Will you accept my own cognizance?"

At this moment Maxwell entered the room. The startling rumor of his brother-in-law's arrest had reached him while walking in the streets and he had hastened to ascertain the cause. "What's this, judge," he inquired rather sharply, having little patience with this childish attempt to stop an elephant by a paper fence.

"How do you do, Mr. Maxwell? Serious affair this. These gentlemen are charged with conspiracy, and if found guilty, will have an opportunity to find that the laws of the land cannot be trifled with."

"Are you judge or prosecuting attorney?"

"Mr. Maxwell, I must request you to remember where you are. This is a court of justice, sir."

"According to traditon, yes. Will you accept me as bail?"

"For all of them?"

"Why, of course. I have fixed the sum total at sixty thousand."

"All right; make out the papers."

This was done, and five minutes later the duodecuple breathed once more the air of freedom. "What does it all mean?" Maxwell inquired, as they were seated in the car to return to National Hall.

Richard explained, but Maxwell shook his head and said: "I do not see the use of it. Of course there is nothing in the case."

"Yes, there is, Lucius; there is a bluff in it. They have been driven to madness, and in this madness imagine a switch to be a lance. But here we are, gentlemen, so get ready for work. Maxwell, you had better stay and hear what is going on."

"All right, Richard, I'll be a good listener, and if need be, a good executioner."

Again Richard took the floor. "We must act, friends, and act quickly. We cannot strike without further provocation, and must therefore contrive this provocation. Let me see; the judge set our hearing for Wednesday week, so we

have no time to lose. We must resolve into a committee, and carry out the necessary measures with expediency. All the trades of the country must ask to-morrow of their employers for eight hours work per diem; nor must they grant more than twenty four hours of grace for deliberation. We know beforehand that the request will be refused, and must, therefore, telegraph once more to headquarters to prepare for a general strike, the time to be specified by a final message. Use ciphers, friends, for these telegraph lines are in connivance with our foes, and will hurt and thwart us, if they can and dare."

In accordance with this programme the demand for the reduction of time was universally refused. Then the few simple and yet portentious words were flashed over the lines: "Friday next, at twelve A. M."

It was Thursday then, and everything went its customary way. Nothing on the surface indicated that the gases of the great caverns underneath had reached their utmost capacity of resistence, and that to-morrow the eruption would take place. Not an eruption scattering blood and riot, but an eruption powerful and awful in proportion to its quietude. Perhaps the term eruption is inappropriate; perhaps we should have called it a dismemberment of a giant, the untying of the limbs so strong in union, but so weak and helpless in severalty. The night came, the night went and a new morning was ushered in, to pass rapidly for some, and for others slow, for there are always some in misery, and some in glee; but it finally passed for all, and the hour of 12 was proclaimed from the dome of the City Hall.

Then a still, but effective activity began, negative, it is true, but nevertheless startling. The street cars then en route, went to the stables to unhitch and water, as it had been strictly enjoined that no innocent party should be permitted to suffer. The horses in the stalls were all fed and watered and then the employees took their departure for their homes, if they had such or for the head centers of the Brotherhood, if not. The clerks in the public buildings took their

hats and left their employment as well as their places. The mail-carriers laid down their mail pouches and went home. The waiters in the hotels undid their aprons, and stopped whatever work they had been engaged in when the clock tolled the hour of 12. The clerks in the stores left the goods on the counter, and their customers in front of them, to take the way to their respective quarters. The railroad men left the trains ready to start, and those managing the trains which arrived, followed their example. It had been decreed that no train should be abandoned under way, as this would have punished the employees as well as the railroad kings, and entailed suffering upon unsuspecting travelers. But when these trains reached centers or their place of destination, they were abandoned. The tradesmen left their vocation, and the telegraph operators, their machines. No news was flashed over the wires, and no communications received from other parts of the country. No cry of the newsboys was heard that afternoon, no paper was issued. The domestic servants shared in the stampede. The cooks left the dinner broiling on the range, and the grooms their stables, after first seeing to the well-fare of the innocent animals entrusted to their care, and all of them who had no families to supply their wants, went to the headquarters of the Brotherhood to be fed, for, thanks to the forethought of Richard, ample preparations had been made, plentiful provisions of all kinds laid in to last long enough to bring a dazed money aristocracy to terms. Our friend knew as well as anybody that the world is based upon mutuality and that the members need the stomach as well as the stomach the members; but he knew also that his clients, if duly prepared, could endure without harm and for a short time, the strain-fatal to the helpless and uninitiated.

The city presented a strange appearance that afternoon. It looked like a giant whose blood has all rushed to the heart, leaving the extremities not only pale, but also weak and powerless. There was only this difference, that in this case the blood had concentrated in a dozen hearts teaming with

life, strength and agility, but preserving order and decorum. The streets were nearly empty. Only now and then a startled, nervous figure would glide along the pavement, wondering what all this meant, and whether the world was likely to come to an end that night. Occasionally two friends would meet in that way, and then the wonderment shaped itself into the question: "What does it mean? What is going to happen next?"

The moneyed men of the city stole to their respective haunts, and there gathered in groops asking the same questions, and receiving the same reply. "Don't know." Nobody knew, nobody knew even an outlet from this dilemma. No one even knew how far this stagnation extended, for the desks of the operators stood vacant and no message could be either wired or received, for the stockholders had only the money, but not the skill to ask for news or help. They felt like a caravan overtaken by the samum of the desert. They lie stricken down by the hot breath, covering mouth and eyes and ears, to keep the deadly sand from entering, but they do not know how far the samum extends, and whether their friends and mates in other places suffer like them or not.

It was a terrible isolation which they endured that afternoon, a desolation made a hundred fold worse by the fear of something worse to come. There rose before their vision of the faces of the thousands they had plundered, and with this vision the natural fear that the day of reckoning was near and that they would all be immolated on the altar of a dreadful vengeance. And did they take any measures to ward off the pending blow? No, they lay their hands idly in their laps, looking helplessly at each other, but stirring neither hand nor foot, to offer a compromise or utter a request. It is not stubbornness of despair. They allow the dusk of evening to descend upon the desolate city, then start home, startling at every noise, shrinking from every shadow, and expecting every moment the mob which in their imagination has gathered and is coming to despoil them of treasures now so valuable and irksome.

And *did* it gather? The reader is aware that our foul social system has produced many gauls that would delight in plunder, rapine, violence and murder; but he is also aware that our hero is not the man to allow the hilt to be thus twisted from his hands. He had urged the necessity of precaution upon his friends, and when the mantle of night had fallen upon the city, bands of armed men began to patrol the streets. Plutopolis numbered fully a hundred and fifty thousand of them, and while the aristocracy was trembling with fear, these yeoman renounced their bed and slumber, and guarded their homes against foes, with whom they so unjustly accused them of being in league.

In consequence not a riot occurred during the night, and in the morning the men of wealth once more met in knots to discuss the situation, and to bring about conciliation with the people whom they secretly despised, but whom they had found so indispensible, not merely for their comforts, but their very existence. Many of them had had no meal since the beginning of the strike, and the stomach is too powerful a persuader to be disregarded very long. They no longer debated the feasibility of concessions, but their absolute necessity, and trembled at the possibility of a rejection of their overtures.

But where should they go? Whom should they meet? At last one of them suggested that they should appoint a committee, and wait upon Richard Woods, the acknowledged leader, if not originator of the movement.

"I think you will find him at National Hall," he closed, "for it is the headquarters of the brotherhood." A committee of three was then chosen among them, Senator Cheatham, who rose, when his name was mentioned, and said with a dubious shake of his head. "You had better send some one else. Mr. Woods and I are not on the friendliest terms, and my selection might hurt rather than benefit our cause." His name was then withdrawn, and the delegates dispatched. An anxious hour followed their departure; a second one of even greater suspense ensued, and the comparatively small band had almost given up the hope of an adjustment, when the messengers

returned, bringing good cheer, but stating that the leaders of the Brotherhood would not give a definite reply before they had heard from other places. Operators had at once been dispatched to the telegraph bureau, but wishing to end the uncertainty of their friends, the messengers had not deemed it prudent to wait for further news. Let us leave them and hasten to headquarters, where we find our friends, a little weary from their vigilance, but flushed with hope and supported by the conviction that the enemy had at last perceived his real weakness, and the uselessness of further resistance. The operators were dispatched, as stated before, and about two hours later, sent word that telegraph communication with the interior had been established. The wires were at once connected with National Hall and then came, tick after tick, the news concerning the result of the strike all over the country. It did, however, offer nothing new. The effect had been the same everywhere. The same consternation on the part of the wealth; the same moderation on the part of the people, coupled with the same zeal and care for the preservation of order. In some places the moneyed men had made overtures as early as the evening before, but in most of them they had awaited the morning and then held out the olive branch which had been accepted. The eight hour system was to be introduced without delay, a concession ending without doubt the most stupendous strike ever recorded in history. When the day set for the trial of Richard and his comrades came, they made their appearance in the court room, but were informed by the Hon. Mr. Muddle that the charge had been withdrawn, and the bond surrendered to Mr. Maxwell.

"I am almost sorry," said Richard, to his brother-in law, "that the rascals have weakened. It would have been curious and interesting to see how far justice in Occidentia has become affected by and subjected to the charm of gold. The revision of our judicial system and the election of our judges will have to be one of the first things to be attended to after the introduction of Nationalism."

CHAPTER XXIII.

FOLLOWING UP THE VICTORY.

We have now reached a point of our narrative, where the fate of individuals merges into that of the masses. We have to record the doings of legislatures, the proceedings of Congress, and the deliberations of conventions. But if we lose sight of our particular friends, we feel and perceive their influence in the achievements of masses, thus preserving the link which binds us to them. This is particularly the case with Richard Woods, who has played too conspicuous a role in our drama to be forgotten by his friends and clients. There was perhaps no more popular man in Occidentia just then, and there was surely none more heartily hated by a certain clique. Strange to say, no attempt was made upon his life, a circumstance which we can perhaps explain by the suggestion that his foes saw not merely the uselessness of such a crime at this late hour, but also the consciousness of its imminent danger. Richard had always been one of the main checks upon the rashness and impetuosity of the masses, and to put him out of the way would have been like the destruction of a salutary dam, checking the flood and keeping it from spreading destruction over the valley.

His grateful friends would have showered honors and preferments upon him, if he had let them. "Don't hamper me, friends" he had begged them on more than one occasion, "I can do more good out of office than in. When I am getting too lazy to work, give me a fat office, not before. I promised to let you know when I reached that stage of human development."

So they had let him alone, but there was no meeting which his presence, or at least his spirits did not inspire; no legislation which was not based by his philanthropy, no convention notified by his ardor. Sometimes he was in Patropolis, consulting with the leaders of the Lower House, sometimes in the various capitals of the states, urging the passage

of reformatory measures or restricting the excessive ardor of some Hotspur. Mostly, however, he was in Plutopolis, either in his home, made attractive and beautiful by grace, goodness and loveliness, or in National Hall, directing by his counsel the movements of the brotherhood, that is the Nation. His word was almost always law, yet he never, for even a moment, lost that even tenor, that toleration and forbearance forming one of the main attractions of his character. Seated in the council room he received the news of the day, news mostly fraught with the spirit of nationalism or recording some achievement of its adherents. We cannot record all the doings of the various legislatures, but as they were only the precursors of the more radical measures contemplated, our readers can well afford to lose them. Female suffrage was proposed and then adopted. Next the vacancies of seats in the National Senate were filled, a measure giving our friends one-third of that body. The doings of Congress, however, claim and deserve a more minute attention. Maxwell, who had been sent from Plutopolis, startled soon, after the opening of the session, not his party, which was prepared, but the world, by offering the following resolution:

Whereas, In the course of time, by the abuse of privileges and the misinterpretation of principles and declarations, the document called the Constitution of the United States of Occidentia, has become obsolete, insufficient, and thus invalid.

Be it Resolved, That we, the representatives of the people, herewith decree and provide that the people of these United States of Occidentia meet on the second day of January, eighteen hundred — —, at their respective places of election and then and there elect delegates equal in number to their representatives in this Lower Branch of Congress, said delegates to meet at Lakopolis on the first day of March of the same year, to revise, change, or replace by a more suitable instrument, said Constitution of the United States of Occidentia.

Resolved furthermore, That such a revised constitution, or its substitute, shall be published for three consecutive months prior to January the second, eighteen hundred, to be

voted on said day by the people of the United States, at their usual places of election, irrespective of States, the votes to be Yea or No, on each and every separate section, and finally by Yea or No on the adoption or rejection of the entire instrument.

Provided thirdly, That, if two-thirds, or more than two-thirds of all the registered voters of these United States of Occidentia vote in the affirmative for the adoption of said instrument, it shall, from that day be the fundamental law of the United States of Occidentia, and declared to be such by the signature and proclamation of the then President of the United States of Occidentia.

On the following day the House discussed the provisions of the bill, which was finally passed by a unanimous vote of the body. A few days later the same bill was introduced in the Senate, but postponed and impeded by all means at the disposal of that body. The nation maintained at first a respectful patience, but when the upper branch showed clearly its intentions to disregard the manifest wishes of the people, some ominous grumbling was heard. All the legislatures which had not yet chosen Senators in concordance with their political views passed resolutions requesting their respective representatives to either obey the mandate of their constituents, so plainly indicated by the elections, or to resign and make room for men more in keeping with the spirit of the age. These resolutions were certainly far from complimentary, and the parties affected by them gnashed their teeth in impotent rage. But what could they do? True, they might retard the inevitable result two whole years, but when these had passed away, they would be compelled to step off the political stage forever, and take with them the odium of an entire nation. If there had been the slightast shadow of a hope, they might have held out, and borne the opprobrium of their conduct in the consolation of the coming re-action. But there was no such prospect to cheer and sustain them, and one by one they submitted to the inevitable, and voted Ay on a motion more bitter to them than gall and wormwood.

The President of the nation was at that time a man neither great nor little, neither good nor bad. He was a strict church member, a title which says little if anything. He was in the same predicament as the Senate. If he had any backing; if even a straw had indicated a change in the public sentiment, he might have had the courage to veto the bill, thus leaving a manly protest on record, a manly protest against a measure which he considered injurious. As it was, he left the bill without his signature, thus allowing it to become valid by default.

Congress passed one more law that winter which deserves notice, namely a so called alien law, making it incumbent for any person possessing property in Occidentia to become a citizen of the country within one year after its adoption, or have such property sold at public auction for his benefit. Such a law had longbeen demanded, as foreign syndicates had bought large tracts of land and great industrial establishments in the union, thus introducing a heterogeneous element into the country, an element threatening complications with foreign governments in case of war. It was eminently just, nobody having the right to claim the benefits of a society whose burdens he is unwilling to bear.

It was an eventful day when the delegates chosen by the people of Occidentia for the revision of the constitution met in Lakopolis. They filled a large and spacious hall, and formed a striking contrast with similar political conventions of the past, in as far as bronzed features and sinewy hands hardened by toil and labor, formed the rule, crowding the delicate complexion and soft jeweled hands quite into the background. Not that wisdom, patriotism and philanthrophy are incompatible with a delicate skin and soft fingers. Far from it. What we wished to intimate is, that a different element, the element furnishing the sinews and intelligence, and creating wealth; an element heretofore overlooked and disregarded, had at last taken the prominent position due to its merits and importance. Richard Woods was one of the delegates from Plutopolis, and when after the effecting of a tem-

porary organization, his name was presented for the chairmanship of the body, the storm of applause following the nomination proved too plainly for doubt or cavil, how deeply that name had sunk into the hearts of a grateful nation. The delegate seconding the nomination said in support of his action:

"Fellow Citizens:—In seconding the nomination of delegate from Plutopolis, I cannot forbear giving vent to the emotions filling my heart to overflowing. It would indeed be carrying coal to New Castle, to give you at this late hour the history of Richard Woods, or call your attention to his merits in the great cause of equal rights, and equal duties, now agitating this great country from one end to another, the cause, in fact, which has led to the convocation of this convention and shaped the nature of its work; but I must and will say, that without the noble patriotism of Richard Woods, without his untiring zeal, his marvelous energy, his fertility of resources, and above everything else, his surprising tact, wisdom and moderation, the great work now to be accomplished, would either be unthought of, or at least in a helpless state of infancy. To him this nation owes a debt of gratitude it can never pay, except, perhaps, by perpetuating his name from generation to generation, thus teaching its great grandchildren to think and speak with reverence the name of a man whose virtues and patriotism bestowed upon it the inestimable boon of conditions in conformity with love, justice and humanity."

Those present tell us that they shall never forget the enthusiasm created by these words. The whole assembly rose in a body, and before Richard could help himself, in fact before he was even aware of the intention, stalwart men had raised him to their shoulders, thus showing him against his will to the delegates and the thousands of spectators gathered in the galleries. The applause broke forth with double vigor, and only after the people had shouted themselves hoarse and exhausted their strength, were the hurrahs allowed to die away. When order was restored the motion was put, and our friend

elected unanimously to the highest place of honor at the disposal of the convention. Richard took the chair, and as soon as the noise of approbation had subsided, he said in his simple and yet eloquent way:

"Fellow Citizens:—I do not know whether I ought to thank you for this great honor, for you have exposed me to the greatest temptation of my life. The gentleman seconding my nomination was kind enough to attribute to your humble servant the virtue of moderation. But only the future can and will tell, whether it is strong enough to endure the strain to which your kindness has now subjected it. I need not tell you that it is my sincere and honest intention to discharge the duties of my new position with zeal and impartiality; but, if I fail; if the fiery ordeal through which you make me pass should find me wanting; if the dizzy height to which you have raised me, should disturb the balance of my mind, remember, that it was you that exposed me to temptation, and accord me that compassion due to the reluctant and unintentional sinner. With this provision, I thank you most heartily for the great honor you have bestowed upon me, and trust sincerely that our labors will result in the real and permanent good of our common country."

After the permanent organization of the convention had been affected, a committee of nine was appointed to draw up such changes and revisions of the old constitution, as in their opinion were timely and necessary. At the same time this committee was instructed to see into the advisability and expediency of framing a new constitution, and draft such an instrument in the rough, if their investigations should lead them to entertain the view of the necessity of the change. Such deliberations, if not forseen and anticipated, would have required months of earnest and assiduous labor; but it had been anticipated, and Richard and the ablest minds of the brotherhood had prepared drafts which might now be discussed, and either adopted or rejected by the committee. Nevertheless so radical were the changes suggested, and so far-reaching the consequences of the innovation, that the committee con-

sumed fully a week, before they announced their readiness to report the result of their labors to the convention. The hall was densely packed, when the chairman rapped on his desk with his gavel, and announced that the convention was now ready to receive the report of the committee on the revision of the constitution.

"Mr. Chairman" the chairman of the committee then said, rising to his feet: "Your committee has only partly achieved the work mapped out for it. The subject is so vast, so far-reaching and important that the greatest care and the most scrupulous consideration should be given to it. Before entering upon details, permit me to state shortly and concisely what your committee thinks on the subject, and what it has accomplished. First, it is the unanimous opinion of your committee that the present constitution of the United States of Occidentia has outlived its usefulness, and should therefore be supplanted by a more suitable instrument, representing more fully the advanced ideas of our age. The new constitution, however, should be so radically different from the present one, that your committee recommends an interim of five years before its introdnction, the old constitution to be retained meanwhile, but to be revised in the following manner, to-wit:

First. The instrument should declare that Congress has the right and duty to frame laws, but not to pass them. Such laws, when framed, should be submitted to the vote of the people, a majority of all the registered votes to be required to adopt the law, and a two-thirds majority to change the constitution.

Second. The suffrage of women should be declared the law of the entire country.

Third. The national banks should be abolished and a national currency take the place of gold and silver, the use of these metals being a relic of the barbaric ages, made in the interest of the rich. Provision should be made to restrict the issue of such currency to so much per head, the limit to be fixed in conformity with common sense and experience. The banknotes should read; "*this is*," not "*we promise, etc.*"

Fourth. Attendance to school should be made compulsory, and extended to the end of the eighteenth year. This measure implies interdiction of the working of children in shops, factories, and other places of industrial pursuits.

Fifth. Differences between employers and employees should be settled by a conference equally made up of both parties, and in case of continued variance, by a board of umpires elected by people of the respective districts.

Sixth. The instrument should contain the unequivocal declaration that the highways of the nation are the property of the people, and should be made so wherever this is not the case. In other words, the railroads of the land should be owned and managed by the people at as cheap a rate as the incidental expenses would permit.

Seventh. In case the owners of a railway should refuse to sell, a rival road should at once be commenced and worked at such a low rate as to compel a compliance to the will of the people on the part of these roads.

Your committee has drafted these principles, and they should, in their opinion, be submitted to the convention and be voted on according to the stipulations of the law passed by Congress on the tenth day of December, eighteen — —.

Next, Mr. Chairman, we submit to you a declaration of those principles, which, in our opinion, should form the foundation of the new constitution. We suggest the propriety of submitting them to this convention, which will thus be qualified to decide what further steps should be taken in the matter. Your committee suggests the propriety of creating a commission of fifty, one from each State, the same to be elected by the people in the usual manner, and to meet here or in Patropolis at an early date, to deliberate on and put into the proper shape the principles which I now send to the chair."

Richard demanded of the convention what he should do with the report, which, on motion, was then adopted. On motion of another delegate the articles of the revised constitution were then voted on one by one, and all of them passed, with

some slight changes of words, and a few amendments of no importance. These measures occupied the entire time of the convention for that day, and the body adjourned, feeling that a vital step to progress had been made, but that the work still in store by far overshadowed that of the day. Only a few of the leaders had as yet an idea of the radical nature of the changes of society proposed for the new constitution, and it was natural to expect that some of the delegates would be startled by daring suggestions of the committee.

On the following morning the galleries were more densely packed than before, and when the session of the convention was opened, and the chairman requested the secretary to read the paper offered by the committee on the preceding day, the house was so still that every word could be distinctly understood in its fartherst corners. He read:

"Your committee does not repeat the suggestions embodied in the revision of the old constitution, but merely say that all of them should reappear in the new one. In addition we offer the following:

First. The air, the water, and the soil not being of man's making, should not be owned individually, but be the common and inalienable property of the community as a whole. We suggest, therefore, the propriety of declaring all the land of the country to be the property of the nation, not individually, but collectively, together with all the treasures with which a bountiful nature has endowed the bowels of the earth. In other words, coal, oil, metals of all kinds, gas, and soforth, should be as they really are, the common property of all.

Second. As we are all born alike, that is, naked, helpless, and dependent upon the care of others, we should all be treated alike, receive the same care, the same education, and be given the same chances in the pursuit of life. Poverty should be no hindrance, or rather there should be no poverty, and in cases where the death of parents or their improvidence or ill health, hinder them from doing their duty to their offsprings, the community should take this obligation upon itself, providing for both the physical and mental welfare of

the beings upon whose proper training the future of the country depends.

Third. Having thus trained all the young alike, the community should afterwards remunerate them alike, the sex to make no difference. The careful training, instead of destroying the individuality of the young, develops such individuality in the highest degree, enabling every one to ascertain for what they are adapted. Society should not in the least restrict the choice of occupation, but treat all alike, the scholar and the digger having received their education from the same source. The nation having fostered and raised its children, should provide for them, by giving them all employment.

Society, in a state of civilization, resembles a complicated machine, which cannot work or accomplish its purpose without the activity of every individual part. In other words, *every member of society must work and do its full duty to achieve harmonious result.* This axiom implies the obligation of every member of such society to work, that is, do his full and proper share of labor necessary to keep it in a healthy condition. In fact, the very duty of society to furnish each member the means of a comfortable existence, implies an equal obligation on the part of the member, to do the work chosen. There are two parties that have hitherto shirked this obvious obligation: The wealthy and the tramp. Society as we propose to remodel it, can endure neither extreme, and will by necessity be forced to extract from both these extremes the share of work to be expected from them. The equalization of labor will naturally lessen each worker's burden, and it may be justly expected that with the help of machinery, the hours of work to be demanded of each member of society will fall considerably below the eight hours now so strenuously demanded by the over-worked laborers.

Fourth. Extremes are always dangerous and hurtful. Thus, extreme wealth and extreme poverty are not only hurtful to society, but to the parties individually. We therefore propose to make them more nearly alike in this respect, by

making land the common property of the nation. How this can be done without injury to the old, the infirm and the defenseless, we leave to wisdom and discretion to determine.

Fifth. The different classes, ranks and occupations having thus melted into one brotherhood, the lines of States and sections will become not only useless and superfluous, but even hurtful, for which reason we counsel the removal of such lines, and State governments, which would then only form costly and unmeaning fixtures in the economy of the nation. How the affairs of the nation should be managed, in fact all the instigations, offices and appliances necessary for the good and efficient government, a government moreover so novel and untried as the one which we propose to institute, requires more time than your committee has been able to devote to so important a subject, for which reason we once more suggest the creation of such a commission as our report recommends."

The readers will learn from the imperfect account of the proceedings of the convention, how difficult a task presented itself to their view. It is difficult to remodel old and time-honored institutions into new forms, but is much more difficult to create something out of nothing, to condense vague theories into compact and tangible forms. To increase the difficulty, now prejudices entered their protest; now privileges unfair and unjustifiable, but sanctioned by the rust of ages and the deep rut they had worn into the highways of society, uttered their wail, and appealed to the sympathy of the convention. Whole days were spent in listening to such protests, and as many more to show the hollowness of the privileges whose projected removal whirled up so much dust, but finally the preamble of the committee was adopted, and Congress petitioned to create the commission proposed. It had remained in session beyond its usual time, expecting some similar demand, and now passed in its closing session a bill authorizing an election, whose purpose was the choosing of the commissioners in question. A month later the commission met in Patropolis, and worked assiduously in the good cause. Yet it required fully three months to perfect their labors. We

have no time to give their new constitution in detail, but will say, that it embodied the principles elucidated, giving many details, which we shall refer to in due season.

CHAPTER XXIV.

THE NEW DAY IN ALL ITS GLORY.

It is twelve years later. We have just returned from a trip to Occidentia and will report what we saw and heard, imagining, perhaps groundlessly, that our readers are anxious to learn what has become of our friends particularly, and the people of that great country generally.

We find Richard and his estimable consort in the old home, surrounded by four beautiful, good and intelligent children. The millions of our hero have melted away, and he depends upon his labor for his support. He has filled several places of trust and holds at present a responsible position in the internal revenue office of Plutopolis. He has not sought these places, but the places have sought him, and he has filled them with so much credit to himself and benefit to his fellow citizens, that the people talk seriously of electing him to the highest position in the gift of the nation, in spite of his protestations. Mrs. Kean still lives with the Woods,' playing kindergarten with the youngsters, and braving wonder and indignation of Mr. Chronos.

Maxwell and Elinor live near by, also blessed by several offsprings which share the love and solicitude of Mrs. Kean with the Woods'. Mrs. Cheatham abandoned the great mansion on Palace street on the death of Mr. Cheatham which occurred about five years ago. He had lost the sight of his remaining eye, and taken to excessive drinking to drown the unpleasant memories of the past, and the reflections connected therewith. In one of the drunken spells which had at last become daily occurrences, he fell over the balustrade of a balcony and dashed out his brains on the pavement below, un-

regretted and unmourned, a sad illustration of the vanity of a success based upon greed, malice and selfishness.

General Runwell and Bertha prospered deservedly, the General having recognized in season that true happiness is coupled with honesty and simplicity, and that a greatness resulting from usurpation and disregard of the rights of a free people, is like a palace built on the crater of a volcano, or the sword of Damocles suspended over the owner's head by a thread. Professor Andersen lives with them, making experiments for the little Runwells, and lecturing occasionally to his big children, the people, in spite of his eighty years. He says he is determined to become a centenarian.

Gottlieb and Sophie are still thriving, dispensing pure pepper and other spices to their patrons, and aided by a number of little Grads, which deserve their patronyms, being *straight* in body and soul. Jim Murphy still stirs the coal under the boiler of Dennis Court and delights in telling the young Pats of the neighborhood the story of the Tinker and the trying scenes of the Crisis.

The Duncans still live in Lakopolis, Duncan superintending the gunshop given him in fee simple by his friend Dick. He also stands high in the estimation of the people, who have entrusted him repeatedly with the execution of important public functions.

Now, as to the condition of the social and political condition of Occidentia, we can do nothing better than accompany Richard on a tour of inspection, which he undertook at the request of the President and in behalf of a foreign commissioner, sent by his government to view the condition of a country so highly prosperous as to attract the attention and excite the envy and admiration of all civilized nations. He brought credentials from his government to the President of Occidentia, who thought he could do nothing better than recommend him to the care of the man to whom this state of prosperity was due, more truly due than to any other mortal. The President, of course, had no authority to enforce any demand upon the time and complaisance of our friend, and there-

fore clothed his commission in the form of a civil request, knowing well that Richard Woods would comply if his duties would permit. He managed to disengage himself for a moment or two, and the couple started on a tour so full of the liveliest interest to the commissioner, that this individual fell from one excitement into another, never really recovering his equipoise until he returned to Plutopolis. We would like very much to join them, but as deadheads are no longer tolerated in Occidentia, we must confine ourselves to the recording of such changes as illustrate most strikingly the great changes the country has undergone. Let us begin with Plutopolis. The commissioner, true to his duties as investigator, asked numerous questions, which Richard answered promptly and satisfactorily, a circumstance greatly facilitating our task, as we have only to chronicle their conversation to satisfy our readers.

"I see but very few banks," asked the commissioner—whom we shall call by his family name, Falk, for shortness—"How do you account for this singular phenomenon?"

"There is no need for more, as they are only used for deposits. Our constitution does not exactly forbid interest, but a creditor cannot collect over three per cent. In my opinion the principle that money can earn money is a damnable one."

"And why, Mr. Woods?" the other asked, with considerable surprise.

"Because it is labor which earns money, and labor alone is therefore entitled to such compensation."

"That principle would reduce many a family to beggery."

"You mean it would compel many an idler to work, in other words to fullfill obligations he owes society. That is undoubtedly the effect its adoption would have, and a very salutary one it would certainly prove, not only to society, but also and chiefly to the idlers themselves."

"But what do you do with all your idle capital? There must be a perfect stagnation."

"It does not appear that way. I suppose the reason is,

that it has been invested in factories of every description. Our people are so prosperous, you see, that they purchase three times the quantity of goods of every description, thus preventing a glut in the market and panics resulting therefrom."

"Yes, everything seems to work very smoothly, but don't you meet with an occasional hitch?"

"Of course we do. Human nature is far from perfect, and human institutions share this imperfection. We are experimenting, and when we discover a flaw in the machinery, we are sincere enough to call it a flaw and to correct it. Several amendments to our constitution have thus originated. Here we are at the Custom House. Do you wish to inspect it?"

"No. I have a tolerably clear idea of the nature of such places; still I would like to ask a question or two: You have no longer a prohibitory tariff, have you?"

"We have not. Our people have grown in intelligence, which, in turn has made them more patriotic, inducing them to patronize home industry in preference to that of foreign nations."

"A very convenient patriotism," Falk replied with a smile. "From what I see, your fabrics and manufactures are without exception superior to those I saw in Europe. If this were otherwise; if your people could buy better goods at cheaper prices abroad, do you think that their patriotism would stand the test?"

"Probably not. In fact, it is my maxim, and, unless I err, really the maxim of our institutions, to make rectitude easy, and corruption hard. Measures based upon injustice or unfairness are sure to fall sooner or later."

"Still you trade considerably with the Old World?"

"Of course we do. There are things which it can make better and cheaper than we, and such things we purchase from them, endeavoring to exchange them for products which we, in turn, can make better and cheaper. Thus we buy tea from China, coffee from the Tropics, silks from France, and leather

from Russia, managing like prudent housekeepers, to keep the balance of trade pretty even—"

"I see. Well give me an Occidentian for smartness. He beats the Yankee all hollow."

Richard laughed and acknowledged the compliment by a bow.

"I know we are smart, that is, shrewd in driving a bargain, but we are not half as smart as we were ten years ago. Intelligence has taken the place of our former smartness, and that is well, for smartness is an animal trait peculiar to the fox and opossom, both of them animals unworthy of imitation."

"Your schools, they say, are excellent."

"They are, and their excellence begins to tell. It is now ten years since the frequentation of schools to the end of eighteen was made compulsory, and they are turning out a set of youths of both sexes marked by greater intelligence and knowledge, as well as greater physical strength."

"How do you make that out? I have always thought that long and assiduous study would impair the body instead of strengthening it."

"So it will, if injudiciously applied. With us the training of the mind and that of the body go hand in hand, that is calisthenics and the gymnasium are coupled with every school nor do we allow the period of daily study and recitation to exceed six hours. In addition to this, the children of both sexes are compelled to bathe daily, and learn to swim, in suitable seasons of course, and all these things combined, secure to us the handsome, strong, healthy and intelligent young people you meet at every step."

"I must confess that your young people are remarkable for beauty. I haven't seen a single cripple, I verily believe."

At this moment they were passing by a large building devoted to the manufactory of machinery. Falk gazed upon the busy scene with great interest, and said: "Is it true that your constitution forbids corporations of every kind?"

"It is true."

"But how is this? Are you not aware that such combinations have produced all modern achievements?"

"They have, and all modern evils and misery as well. What is the object of such corporations? The advancement of our race? He must be simple indeed, who attributes to them such motive. Their object is to make money, and in order to make money they must necessarily rob the workman of a portion of his hire. These corporations have produced millionaires on one side, and paupers on the other. We could therefore, in justice to our laboring men, tolerate them no longer."

"And do you not feel their loss? Do your individual efforts fill the void?"

"Our efforts are not all individualistic. Co-operation has, in many instances, taken the place of corporations, and in other instances the government, *i. e.*, the nation, takes their place."

"Co-operation instead of corporation. Isn't that whipping the devil round the stump?"

"Far from it, Mr. Falk. A corporation is a body politic, an individual, differing from other individuals only in the absence of a heart, making the creature the dangerous beast it really is. A co-operation, on the other hand, is an assemblage of individuals who work jointly to increase their strength, but are individually responsible for their actions. They merely divide the result of their labor, while the co-operation assumes not only the management of the concern, but all its profits."

"I see. And your government works. Are they not open to corruption, Mr. Woods?"

"They are in a measure; but I have discovered this axiom in all my observations. It takes a corrupt people, to make a corrupt government. I am happy and proud to say that our government is as nearly pure as the imperfection of human nature allows."

"It had not always that reputation, Mr. Woods."

"I know, but our new constitution has removed the cause

of and inducement to corruption, thereby removing corruption itself. Our Congress no longer makes our laws, but merely frames them leaving the decision to the people. This one single feature has laid on its back the lobby, synonym for hell, a place where all the vices flourished in perfection, a hothouse where everything low, mean and despicable was bred and nurtured. This is our courthouse, Mr. Falk."

"Quite a small building for such a large city."

"We find it ample. As I said before, our people are far from perfect, and I would not wish you to form the idea that I think them so. Still our statistics show that crime has shrunk to a compass insignificant to its former extent. Thefts for instance, have almost totally disappeared from the list."

"Strange! I wish I could say the same thing for my country. Can you not give me the receipt which has produced such a happy result?"

"Yes, it is very simple. Here it is. Give everybody plenty and remunerative employment, and you take away the inducement to theft."

"There is something in that" Falk replied musingly.

"It contains the whole question in a nut-shell. My mother used to tell me that her parents during their sojourn in Europe, did not dare to leave the most minute article exposed over night, without the certainty of its disappearance. Again she lived among these very same people after they had emigrated to this country, and, behold: Articles of value could remain exposed without any danger of annexation. Now do you think that these people changed their character with their country? Such an assumption is too absurd, to be entertained for a moment. The German proverb says: 'Opportunity makes thieves.' It ought to be amended into 'necessity makes thieves.'"

Richard and his friend frequently made use of the electric cars traveling the city in every direction.

Falk marveled at their fine equipment, and at the cheapness of the fare, which was only one cent for every half-mile, and

Richard said in explanation: "The public is sovereign here, and the best only is good enough for them. As to the fare, the lines are owned by the public and charge just enough to keep up the wear and tear, and pay the employees decent wages. You will see the same feature during your rides on our railways."

"They, too, are owned by the government, I believe?"

"Or the people, which here means the same thing."

"Did the government purchase them?"

"Yes, at their original cost, deducting, of course, the depreciation produced by time and usage. The government bought them with bonds, running fifty years, and bearing one per cent."

"Rather low interest, I should say. Did they not object?"

"Not the rank and file of the stockholders, but the bosses or kings, as we used to call them. The former in many instances did not know what a dividend means, the bosses generally monopolizing the cream of the concern. It is therefore natural that they yielded easily and with good grace."

"But the kings kicked, eh?"

"Viciously, but without hurting anybody."

"Did you use compulsory measures in such instances?"

"No, sir. The roads were given three months to accept or reject the offer, and when this time of grace had expired, the government commenced the construction of rival lines with such vigor that the bosses cried for mercy. In such instances they were forced to pay for the preparations I alluded to."

"Good for them, or rather for so strong and sensible a government."

In this way they completed the rounds of the city, and then started for the interior. Falk was greatly impressed by the safety, elegance and convenience of all the equipments connected with the railway. He marveled when Richard told him that the charge per mile for passengers amounted to only

one cent, and that in the far west, on long distances, there was a reduction from this charge.

"I do not see how the government can afford to run the trains at that rate."

"It does not only afford it, but makes money. The travel has not quadrupled since the introduction of the law rates, for that would be underestimating it by far. I think I can safely state that twenty people now travel for one in olden times, swelling the earnings of the roads to a gigantic sum, even in the face of the increased expenses. If I am not mistaken the government has already redeemed half the bonds issued to the stockholders."

"And you say the roads are managed with increased safety?"

"That is what I stated. You see, the forces are now much greater, and as the rules of our civil cervice are invariably carried out, the men stand on their good behavior, being sure of work as long as they live, or at least as long as they are able, to say nothing of the severe penalties for any negligence connected with loss of life or limb."

"Then your government does not pension its employees in case of disablement or old age?"

"No, sir. But we have created several funds, managed by the government, from which pensions are paid to the aged or to widows, on payment of regular installments during the years of strength and manhood."

"Ah, a kind of life insurance?"

"Yes, something similar, only the rates are much lower and in conformity with equity and safety."

"Please explain to me its leading features?"

"With pleasure, although you will hardly find anything strange or startling about its provisions. In fact the only thing startling about the thing is that we could so long let political influence and favoritism taint our public offices and their incumbents. I think you will find our civil service and its provisions much like that of your own country. Let me start with the graduation of our young people from school. I

say people, because you must understand that our girls stand the same chance in all such branches, adapted to their sex as well as ours. You know that the curriculum of our common schools ends with the eighteenth year. The abiturients, as you call them in Germany I believe, are subjected to a very rigid and thorough examination, and only those that pass it creditably, are allowed to enter upon the specific course which qualifies them for the profession they have chosen for life. Those that fail, form the hewers of wood, the handlers of the pick and shovel, occupations creating no envy or discontent, because they all had the same chances. When the students have finished the specific course, they are subject to a second examination as severe, but fair and impartial as the first one, and those that have withstood this second and last ordeal are entered upon the list of the representative branch they have chosen, and are then employed in due rotation as vacancies occur."

"Just as with us, only we sometimes make exceptions in cases of uncommon qualifications or aptness."

"So do we, but such cases are rare, and the favorite person must be very capable indeed to justify such exception."

As they rolled through the densely settled country, Falk expressed his surprise at its beauty as well as the high state of cultivation manifest everywhere.

"I have been led to expect something very different. Our farmers, in talking of your agriculture, generally turn up their noses, talk of "Raubbau," and like the Pharisees of old, thank the Lord, that they are not like you miserable sinners."

"They think of our former condition," replied Richard with a smile. "Ten years ago the farms were very large, poorly tilled, and run down. Now things are very different. I suppose you are aware that we do not own the land here in severalty?"

"I heard so, and could never understand how such a change could be accomplished without a bloody revolution."

"It was not so hard as you imagine. You must understand that nine-tenths of all the lands were loaded with heavy

mortgages, mortgages sometimes reaching the value of the estate. Farmers thus situated really heralded the change as a delivery."

"I see. And now, can they be disturbed in their possessions?"

"Not if they pay their rent which amounts to just two per cent of the appraised valuation of the land."

"Does that not constitute a heavy burden with their taxes?"

"It is the *only* tax they pay, and if they pay it, no power in the land can dispossess them."

"And can they rent as much as they please?"

"They cannot. A commission of experts has investigated the matter and fixed the amount of land one man can till thoroughly and effectively, the law limiting the number of acres to such ability. This amount differs in various sections, depending greatly upon the quality of the soil and the use to which it is put. In the vicinity of large cities a gardener can till or cultivate perhaps no more than ten acres, while the sheep herders of the desert requires a thousand. Here in Plutonia, in Woodland, and most other eastern States, the area has been limited to eighty acres, but families consisting of father and several grown up children, are favored as far as practical by allowing their allotments to be in a body. In Goldland, where they raise choice fruit, twenty acres form the limit, and so on."

"I understand, and the arrangement seems to be fair and equitable. The results, at all events, seems beneficient, for never before have I seen fields so promising as these."

"Yes, the change has been beneficial, and no one wants the old conditions back."

"Not even the wealthy owners, thus stripped of all their wealth? It was pretty tough, you must confess, to be thus deprived of time honored possessions by a decree or the stroke of a pen."

"It was, perhaps hard, but not unjust. Remember, that these lands had been secured by speculations, unfair foreclos-

ures, and many other means unfit to bear close inspection. This act of forfeiture may therefore be justly termed a late act of justice."

"Well, we won't quarrel about that. You know we Europeans are a little ticklish on this subject."

"But how do you manage with land covered by towns and villages?"

"In the same manner. No one is allowed to hold more lots than he actually needs."

"And pays rent for them?"

"Exactly."

"Then there must be a great many vacant lots for which there is no demand."

"You are mistaken. We encourage the building of houses to be tenanted by the owner, and you would be amazed to see the improvements traceable to this policy."

"But where do the poor get the means to build when interest has been abolished, in other words, when money can no longer be borrowed?"

"They get it from the government. There is a certain board in every place whose duty it is to receive such applications, and determine the amount safely to be lent for or rather on the improvement. You can hardly call it a loan either, for the government or the people hold the property until paid for."

"Then, supposing cases of fire. Where is the security?"

"The government issues such policies itself."

"Ah! But what of life insurance?"

"Life insurance is not practiced half as much as in olden times, as the people are more certain of employment, that is of competent livelihood."

"All this is so novel to me, that I can hardly comprehend it. And you find these innovations practicable?"

"Not only practicable, but highly salutory and beneficial. You say yourself, you see traces of prosperity all over the land. Why not be charitable, and attribute them to our new institutions?"

"I am inclined to do so, and fear you would make me a convert if I remained here any length of time."

"You fear? Is a general prosperity so terrible a thing, then?"

"I beg your pardon. Fear was hardly the proper expression. It is rather bewilderment than fear I experience, the bewilderment of a man who does not know whether he is awake or asleep, who does not know whether he sees reality or a mere mirage. As I said more than once: I shall take home food for years of thought. Nor do I doubt that the day will come when I wonder that all this appears strange to me and that our own condition was never considered normal. But what is this? I see high derricks and flames protruding from iron pipes. Are we in the oil fields of Woodland?"

"Exactly."

"And who works these wells now, the government?"

"Even so. Our constitution declares all the earth and the contents of its bowels are the common property of man, and must therefore be worked in the interest of all. The oil is sold at cost, with only enough of a margin to pay the laborer fair wages and allow such repairs as time and use will occasion."

"And you work your coal mines on the same principle?"

"Our coal mines, our gas wells, our beds of iron, copper, gold and silver."

"That must greatly cheapen the cost of living?"

"I should say so. I cannot state exactly what the reduction amounts to, but careful investigations induce me to believe that it is fully twice as cheap to live now as it was ten years ago."

And on they went, from State to State, passing through rich fields and blooming meadows, prosperity written on every scene.

"There is little vacant land here, I notice," said Falk, as they glided over the prairies of Lakonia. "I always thought

there were large desolate tracks here. In reality I have not seen an eighty acre track without a house and desirable improvements."

"It was different years ago, I assure you. Then the houses were the exceptions; the waste, the rule. This State especially was cursed with rich foreign syndicates owning hundreds of thousands of acres in one body."

"How did you get rid of them? I should think their dispossessments would have led to complications with foreign powers?"

"Congress passed a law requiring everybody holding land here, to become citizens. When these parties failed to comply with its requirement, the land was sold at auction and bought by the government, which paid for it in bonds, bearing one per cent."

"And they accepted?"

"What could they do? Countries don't go into war on account of such trifles, to say nothing of the vanity of any European government to think that it could whip us in our own country. No, Mr. Falk, they made a virtue of necessity, and accepted the offer made them in preference to losing all."

In this manner they discussed one point after another, Falk often differing with Richard in the legality of certain measures, but universally acknowledging the happy effect upon the people.

"Tell me, Mr. Woods," he said, as they were returning to Plutopolis, "how did you manage in regard to the money owned by your millionaires. *Did* you despoil them of that also?"

"No, Mr. Falk, we did not go to that extreme, but we passed a law which will meet their case and make them harmless."

"And this law?"

"Provides, that no person can leave to his descendants anything excepting his personal effects."

"And his money?"

"Reverts to the common fund. I believe they made the

provision that the old and burdensome debts of the country, contracted in the times of levity and recklessness, shall be paid with such moneys. At all events our constitution provides that the equality of its people shall not be disturbed by the privilege of stepping into dead men's shoes, and in my estimation such a provision is eminently just, fair and wise. But here we are home, Mr. Falk. With the hope and wish that you enjoyed our trip, I bid you a cordial farewell."

We will imitate him by saying a cordial farewell to our readers, trusting that we have not bored them too much, and that the submittal of these thoughts and suggestions will lead to happy results.

THE END.